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FREDERICK DELIUS AT SEVENTY

From the brush drawing by Edmond Kapp *In the collection of Mr. Felix Aprahamia*

FREDERICK DELIUS

by

PETER WARLOCK
(Philip Heseltine)

REPRINTED WITH ADDITIONS
ANNOTATIONS AND COMMENTS BY
HUBERT FOSS

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CONTENTS

	Preliminary Note	7
	Introduction	9
	FREDERICK DELIUS *by Peter Warlock*	27
1	Delius' Life	29
2	His Operas	74
3	His Choral and Orchestral Works	99
4	His Music Viewed as a Whole	120
	Additions, Annotations, and Comments	137
	Postscript	191
	Appendix: *A List of Frederick Delius' Compositions*	196
	Index	217

PRELIMINARY NOTE

THE text of the main pages of this volume have been reset (on pp. 29-136) from a copy of the original book, *Frederick Delius* by Philip Heseltine, as printed by the Mayflower Press, Plymouth, for John Lane the Bodley Head, Ltd., and published by the latter firm in 1923. The reprint is, so far, exact; no alteration or editing has been done, save the correction of an occasional misprint in the original text, the minor adjustment of commas to suit the present house-style of the publishers, and the spelling of the possessive case of the composer's name in the form 'Delius',' not 'Delius's.' Pagination is of course changed, but the running headlines have been retained. It was judged best to omit the preface, which was general and not special in its intention, and in style better suited to 1922 than 1952. Heseltine's own list of the composer's works has been used with additions and alterations explained on p. 187. Even his own full and pleasant index has been preserved as far as possible, with the page-numbers suitably changed and additions in a similar style made to refer to the new pages.

Towards the preparation of this book many people have given me valuable and willing aid. My gratitude is first of all due to Mr. Roger Quilter, Mr. Charles Kennedy Scott, and Mr. Percy Aldridge Grainger for the rich personal reminiscences they have contributed on pages 155-7, 157-170, and 170-180 respectively. I offer them my sincere thanks in the sure knowledge that in so doing I write on behalf of all their readers. Next, I would wish to thank the

composer's sister, Mrs. Clare Delius Black, and Mr. Felix Aprahamian for valuable help and guidance; but I should add that all responsibility for facts and opinion found in my pages rests solely upon me. To Mr. Edmond Kapp I am indebted for his splendid autolithograph of 1932, reproduced as the frontispiece; also to Mr. James McKay Martin for his criticisms and encouragement. Finally, Miss Margaret Pace and Miss Patricia Flanders have read through my proofs for me and in other ways helped me, and my thanks are offered to them.

H. F.

INTRODUCTION

by Hubert Foss

AFTER careful and loving consideration, it has been decided to reprint, in its pristine state, Philip Heseltine's study of Frederick Delius. I think it is a wise and proper decision, and I have attempted to amplify what is patently an incomplete record of the composer's life and works—was it not published eleven years before his death? The arguments in favour and against this (almost) holograph reprint are rehearsed below, for the reason that the arguments themselves throw a light on the biographer, another on the public life of Delius—a great English composer—in relation to our national ways of music-making, another on the position that Delius, as an historic figure, occupies at the moment. In a separate chapter, I have attempted to comment here and there on Heseltine's text, mainly with a view to adding to it, and to append some notes referring to later sources and ideas—those of others and my own. Out of all this compounded book will emerge, I deeply hope, some sense of that curiously complicated, yet oddly simple character, Frederick Delius. To those who merely know the sounds, bathe in the beautiful warm, sunlit sea of harmony in this music which Ritter said was to Debussy as Wagner was to Weber—to those people it may come as a surprise to discover a character of immense virility and even obstinacy. ' Delius' music is so tender,' said Norman O'Neill. The man Delius was not tender but purposeful and projective. The legend that has grown out of his paralysed

blindness and the *' continuelle pâmoison de délicats frottements d'accord'* is entirely at variance with the trapper of dreams himself. He was a trained poacher in the wilds of his own soul, and he set his nets with the usual poacher's disregard of others' convenience. But he sought and caught his own thoughts.

The arguments in favour of an entire and unaltered reprint of Heseltine-Warlock are easy to marshal. The book itself it a work of art, a charming and penetrating study of a musical poet's mind. For itself alone, as a piece of English prose, it is worth reading and re-reading. Cecil Gray[1] describes it as ' a thoroughly sound, and sometimes exceedingly brilliant piece of work, both as biography and as criticism . . . There are sections of the book which are among the finest things in English musical criticism, alike for the soundness of æsthetic judgment and eloquence and grace of style.' Though Heseltine was 28 when he wrote the book and 29 when it was published, there hangs about it a delicious scent of youth and enthusiasm. ' Nimble and light of limb,' the prose seems to dance with an informed enthusiasm, as of a schooled ballerina helping kindly in a beginners' company. And critically, Heseltine was a beginner in the Delius cause. Articles there had been, but no book; so æsthetically aware a writing was this, so sensitively alive not only to Delius' music but to other movements of artistic expression, that it holds an historic place both in Delius' career as a composer and in our musical history.

Above all, this reprinted book is full of Delius—of his words, his views, his influence, his musical intentions and achievements. What matter if, at times, the praise of the master is a little high-pitched in its consistent key? Is it not easier to blame entertainingly than to praise convinc-

[1] *Peter Warlock*: Cape, 1934.

ingly? The heckler, not the seconder of the motion, is the man who catches the reporter's ear. In the early 1920's, an extraordinary sympathy existed between the composer and the critic-biographer; at times it partook of the sentimentality of calf-love, but was none the less genuine for that. Heseltine's book has a natural beauty of its own, as Delius' music has. It tells us many things that can be found in other places only if they have been rooted up, not always kindly, from their first soil of blooming and replanted by another hand. There is no comparable book on Delius; the later books are additional, but they are not equal works of art. Heseltine stands firm.

The arguments on the opposing side are less cogent and less artistic, but may be discussed as being both interesting and informative and not always disadvantageous. The strongest of them is the self-evident fact of incompleteness. Apart from Delius' own contributions, it contains no personal memories earlier than 1910, and the book closes its narrative eleven years before the subject's death. More, in this very personal book, the author has done his utmost to keep his attitude to the composer impersonal; thus he discloses no letters and gives but the vaguest impressions of this 20 years' friendship. Many of the Delius-Heseltine letters have been revealed in print. Heseltine himself, accurate in so many ways, was careless over his own possessions; his nomadic instincts and swift mind made him a poor hoarder of treasures; some of Delius' own letters may be lost, but Heseltine's were preserved and form a most valuable source of information (even if in *oratio obliqua*) about Delius' personality, apart from the light they throw on Heseltine and musical conditions in England in the period after the First World War. The extant letters can be read *in extenso* in Cecil Gray's *Peter Warlock*.

The biographies and reminiscences of the English musicians of the 1900-20 period contain curiously little refer-

ence to Delius. He remained outside the Royal College, Royal Academy 'movements,' and those in them left his music as aloof as the composer's life abroad. Not a reference in the index is to be found in the lives and memoirs of Parry, Stanford, Mackenzie, not one in Fuller Maitland's *A Doorkeeper of Music* or Graves' *Post-Victorian Music*. There are mentions in Basil Maine's *Elgar*, mostly for the purpose of comparison. Some charming memories are presented to us by Derek Hudson in his life of Norman O'Neill (Quality Press, 1945); some interesting but less charming memories and comments in Cecil Gray's *Musical Chairs*. The composer's personal friends have written little about him, no doubt for two reasons—the personal quality of their friendship, and their knowledge of Delius' distaste for newspaper or other non-critical exposure.

The composer's sister, Mrs. Clare Delius Black, has given us a valuable personal and family record in *Frederick Delius—Memories of my Brother*—by Clare Delius (Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1935), and a vivid account of the last years of crippledom and blindness has been written by Eric Fenby in his *Delius as I knew him* (Bell, 1936). Sir Thomas Beecham's *A Mingled Chime* (Hutchinson 1934) also contains much information, but only up to 1923. These are scattered sources, and in present times it is not at all certain that the books from which their words flow remain actively in print. The seeker after the elusive personality of the great English composer will have to assemble many fragments into an intelligible pattern of mosaic design, and likely involve himself in library research. Professor Arthur Hutchings, in his *Delius* (Macmillan, 1948), has essayed a conflatus of biographical facts and fancies derived from some of the sources mentioned above, but adds little to our knowledge, while much that is essential to the true picture of this remarkable figure is omitted or blurred.

To this area, then, extend the available sources of in-

formation—material separated, unconnected, elusive, in its first form of expression protected by copyright for many years to come. A legitimate and not surprising wonder arises in the mind whether this moment is a suitable—a possible —one for a definitive life of Frederick Delius. Can any moment in the future, indeed, ever be suitable? An official biography would palpably lose ' the first fine careless rapture ' of Heseltine's book, would reduce sister Clare's convincing words to bare historical skeletons and amanuensis Fenby's almost passionate account of his life at Grez to bald statistics. Photographic, even anatomical in its mental analysis, such a biography may be, unless perhaps the whole story were romanticized. Best plan of all (it would seem), let Delius' own letters and relics light up the text and enliven the plain tale. Even here, there are difficulties.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the Delius Trust possesses in its safes a quantity of Deliana (if I may venture the word), mostly unknown to us today and seemingly inaccessible to the enquiring scholar. That long-suffering and long-sighted woman, Jelka Rosen, who married and stood by and later looked after Delius, gathered in her store a large number of letters and writings that are now in the possession of the Delius Trust. To these documents it would seem Sir Thomas Beecham is the only person who has free access. The matter is touched on in a manner by Cecil Gray in his *Musical Chairs*. After Delius' death in 1934, Gray was asked by Jelka Delius to consider the project of writing the ' official life '—a task he hesitated to undertake. Beecham then announced that he himself would be the official biographer; that office, in 1950, he retains, with sole prescript on the relevant papers. But so far, he has not written the life. Not one word from his pen has been printed for us to read. And, it is not unkind to ask, will his book-of-the-future be a definitive biography? It is not wrong, I fancy, to expect of a conductor that he

will conduct, and of a writer that he will write; that each should understand his own medium technically is a *sine qua non*. How much of Delius and how much of Beecham will be dispensed to make up this new biographical compound, no one can guess, and, until the Delius Trust's documentary museum is laid open to the eyes of scholars and musicians, no one will be able to find out. The Beecham book may be an *ipse dixit;* but the identity of the *ipse* will need careful defining.

Nothing, it is apparent, so far raises more than a flimsy hurdle to the re-issue of Heseltine's own book. There remains to be discussed only the subtle question of that author's own views on his subject.

Philip Heseltine changed his views on Delius' music. The fact is indisputable. Hutchings describes his anti-Delius phase, and puts it down partly to Heseltine's breadth of interest in expressive music of every kind, a quality Delius conspicuously lacked; in this matter there arose a fundamental conflict of mind and temperament between the two men.

Hutchings writes, Heseltine 'grew out of his first intoxication and recognized the value of other vastly different means of expression.' Fenby records a visit of Heseltine's to Grez around 1928 when in conversation the latter expressed the opinion that 'out of Delius' enormous output, three of the major works only would live—*Sea-Drift, A Village Romeo and Juliet,* and *Appalachia.*' Otherwise, whenever there was an opening to attack the music he had once championed, he thrust his critical rapier in, hilt and all.' Gray in his Warlock biography makes a similar record. I myself heard on many occasions Heseltine denigrate both Delius and his music. We know that he refused the appeal to go out and give secretarial help to the crippled composer.

But like quantities of other facts, this one is neither plain nor simple. Heseltine was an extremely changeable man. In

considering the relationship between the composer and the critic, we find ourselves confronted with the oddest dual dichotomy; and neither in art nor in psychology do two and two add up invariably to four.

The man Delius was totally unlike his music, the one displaying a most purposeful character, the other the vivid nebulosity of dreams. So with Heseltine. The tender, imaginative, poetical youth became hardened—it was only to be expected—in the rough and tumble of the musical world. The hardening process however was a strange one, for Heseltine deliberately cultivated a kind of carapace as a protection again 'the slings and arrows.' He created out of one side of his nature a second personality, that other man 'Peter Warlock,' who eventually absorbed and well-nigh strangled the sensitive visionary who was Heseltine. The violence of Warlock's reaction against everything beloved by Heseltine is a main motif in Cecil Gray's biography. It manifested itself not only against Delius, but against many of his old friends, with whom (it is well known) he was liable to quarrel irreparably. The Warlock *alter ego* was a harsh and penetrating critic, without any weaknesses of personal sympathy—suspicious of them, in fact.

Now, it is arguable that under the staring light of the dissecting table, no music is more easy to pick to pieces of unmeaning shape than Delius', for the music is first and last a living emotional expression; stifle the breathing vitality, and the merest fool could become a merely analytical critic. Cecil Gray, a sympathetic admirer of Delius' music, goes so far (in *Musical Chairs*) as to say that 'nothing is a flawless masterpiece,' and inclines to the view that the composer's work after his first great period showed a tendency to tail off in accomplishment.

Warlock's cold objectivity of criticism can be explained partly by the reaction of Warlock against Heseltine, partly

by the throwing off, with unnecessary violence, of the influence Delius had over his youthful years. But, I repeat, Warlock was a changeable man. We have no idea, can only surmise, what would have happened had 'Warlock' not finally submerged 'Heseltine' and brought both to an untimely death in 1930. Cecil Gray gives us a strong and hopeful lead here. After the middle period of 'exaggerating its defects and minimizing its virtues out of all proportion to actuality,' 'the triumphant apotheosis' (writes Gray) 'of the art which had meant so much to him in his youth, and for which he had worked so hard, brought about a strong reaction towards it once more.' Heseltine 'threw himself heart and soul into the organization of the [1929 Delius] festival, the success of which must undoubtedly in large part be ascribed to his untiring efforts and enthusiasm. Similarly, the mystical sentiment and introspective melancholy of these last songs—as they were to prove to be—and the romantic idealism of the letters, were precisely those qualities against which Peter Warlock was wont to inveigh most furiously. How true it is that *on revient toujours à son premier amour,* both in art and in life; how often we find it happening! So often, indeed, that one is tempted to regard it as a natural and inevitable *coda,* a presage of the impending end.'

Both the influence which Delius wielded over 'Heseltine' and the reaction of 'Warlock' against it are important in the study of the composer's life and music. The story of their friendship is one of grave and loving romance, between the older man, experienced in musical dreams, and the lad, seeking some dreams in which he might at once believe, in his striving towards the light. A full account with a large number of letters is given by Cecil Gray in his *Peter Warlock,* which is equally illuminating of the composer and his young friend. No Delius-lover can afford to miss it. True, Delius (probably Mrs. Delius) preserved more

letters by Heseltine than Heseltine those by Delius. But even if those letters could be reprinted here in full they give but incomplete testimony of Delius' mind and character; nor is the whole episode possible to epitomize; for it is only the interplay of the two minds, divided in age by 30 years, that gives the true psychologcial picture.

The first contact was purely musical. Heseltine, though (we are assured) no infant prodigy while at Eton, was undoubtedly æsthetically impressionable at the age of 16 (1910). Then it was that he heard a performance of the unaccompanied part-song *On' Craig Dhu,* the beauty of which opened a new continent of musical possibilities for him. One readily sympathizes. I think I was 19 years of age, and with some 12 and more years of musical study as background, when I first heard Delius' music—*Brigg Fair* conducted by Sir Henry Wood; the impression it instantly branded on me is quite indelible. It was soon after Heseltine had determined to gather all available scores of this new-found wonder-music that he visited the Fontainebleau neighbourhood to stay with his uncle, the painter Joseph Heseltine, who was well acquainted with the composer in person. Again, memory brings sympathy; I can remember yet the first time, after being nurtured on a musical fare of the dead masters, that I met a live composer, who started with a blank ruled sheet and created music for me to sing and play, apparently out of nothing. The juncture of these two meetings, musical and corporeal, had an immense effect on the boy's mind, so that in 1914 we find him writing to his late music-master, Colin Taylor, ' I spend most of my time saturating myself with Delius' music. I am sure there is no music more beautiful in all the world; it haunts me day and night—it is always with me and seems, by its continual presence, to intensify the beauty of everything else for me.'

The friendship was impressive; but it must be added that

Delius was obsessive. Certain circumstances added to the impressiveness. Having no offspring himself, Delius had a curious interest in the younger people, particularly those who showed a sensitive understanding of his music. Norman O'Neill has recorded (Derek Hudson's biography of him) Delius' interest in his two successive babies and even of his wish to stand sponsor to them—a point that stands at the antipodes from the composer's normal view of the Christian religion and its practices. In such of his letters as we have been so far allowed to see, we find a curious old-world courtesy, not only in the Heseltine correspondence but in that with Eric Fenby as well.

> Of courtesy it is much less
> Than Courage of Heart or Holiness,
> Yet in my walks it seems to me
> That the Grace of God is in courtesy.

So wrote Hilaire Belloc. Courtesy began to decline with trench-warfare in the first of the world conflicts, and went out altogether with the armoured *Blitzkrieg* of the second. We must think back, those that have the age to remember, or, if we are younger, read the fiction of the last hundred years. To be treated as even a semi-equal by the great musical master was much, to be encouraged in such kind and calm terms was even more, for the trouble the elder took in his correspondence with the younger is touching to us today, and must have been like a breath from the pure air of heaven itself, scented with nectar and ambrosia, to the imaginative Etonian. There is much, too, of that other side of Delius, that obsessive purposefulness which forced him to live on and to compose music during a long, wasting sickness which would have caused many men to abandon striving after the mind's good things in favour of a gradual, carefully tended death-in-life.

Under this sweetness, we can indeed find Delius, the self-centred artist (and let us be clear, here, that it was more

the visionary artist than the musical craftsman who for so long obsessed Heseltine). We can read in Eric Fenby of a similar tale, but I shrink from trying to reflect one rainbow-ray of Grez-sur-Loing as he pictures it in *Delius at I knew him*: the same courtesy, the same obsessiveness. It was, perhaps, fortunate that Fenby was also a Yorkshireman.

No less eclectic composer than Delius ever lived. He derived from nowhere, it would seem. No one sensitive to musical sound since the 1800's has not at one time or another been affected by Chopin's registration, and Grieg's influence (the older and younger composers were friends) is at times obvious. A. K. Holland has wisely called our composer 'pre-eminently a folklorist,' and in such guise he descends from the distant ages of man's first struggling efforts. Cecil Gray (*A Survey of Contemporary Music*, Oxford, 1924) makes a similar point. This music could not have been written, one is sure, before Goethe, Berlioz, Keats, Wordsworth, Debussy, and even Wagner, though the same shrewd critic (in *Musical Chairs*) accounts Delius along with Borodin and Moussorgsky, Debussy and Ravel, as one who gave release from the Kundry spell of Bayreuth. Yet the sounds of it all came from, apparently, nowhere. Elgar is reported to have said that music was in the air all around one, ready by those who had the magic hands and ears (like Rima with the spider's spin) to gather a gossamer bobbin for weaving into a patterned texture. After the years, we can see and hear that Rima's delicate wood-lore was more innately Delius' possession than Elgar's. No comparison between the composers is desirable or needed here but it may be permitted to add that Elgar's was a mundane world, of libraries and festivals and orchestral players, while Delius' was one of dreams. 'The ideal life for an artist, at any rate for a musician' (writes Clare Delius), 'should be one of contemplation in the heart of serenity.' For many years Delius experienced this: he hated noise, irrelevancy

of conversation, external interruptions of very temporary and no significant meaning. Many of us do, but few of us have the hard-headed, selfish determination to secure quiet, even if that were possible. But then, not this writer nor every one of his readers has an offering to place in the world's poor-box equal to that of Delius.

For all his retirement in France, the composer was obsessive in two ways. As a composer, he exhibited an extraordinary potency. Most composers were far more positive and active in the laborious task of obtaining performances of their works. Job-getting Delius abhorred; he sought no publicity or admiring success, and only towards the end of his life would he consent to any sort of official recognition. He was out of the coteries of the day; and if his exclusiveness can be said to have made him cliquey, then he made his own clique, *tout seul,* self-contained. The music, however nebulous it may appear under sympathetic analysis, had and still has the supreme quality of compulsion. Without any seeming attempt to do so, it compels the listener's attention and firmly holds it. This priceless power of compulsion is exactly what is most lacking in the music of Delius' contemporaries, Parry, Stanford, and Mackenzie. With a hundred other admirable qualities, they could not so compel audiences and musicians to listen that they were able to retain a firm place in the orchestral repertoire, nor even sometimes to win second and third performances. Cecil Gray writes (to quote *Musical Chairs* once more) that in the 1910-20 period the English Revival 'meant less than nothing to me, apart from the equivocal figure of Delius, who . . . was more a continental than an insular figure.' Equivocal in nationality maybe, but not musically equivocal. The garden of Delius has vitality of soil; whencesoever the seeds came, each plant recurs in its season as a new years runs its round. In a herbaceous border—I think of that at New College, Oxford—a visitor may be familiar

with the name and the growing process, even with the botany, of every plant; he can never become familiar with its beauty. Each visit, if he has clear eyes, reveals a new delight; and for each generation, such a garden will provide a new and lasting series of experiences. The complaint is heard, at times, of luxuriousness, lusciousness, in Delius' music, which would suggest the rank, swift-growing, swift-dying vegetation of jungle swamps. Prehensile in their magnetic attraction these musical growths may be but not like a tropical creeper. The garden is healthy; it re-seeds itself, and its flowers continue to blossom.

Of Delius' obsessiveness as a man, there is ample evidence—the life of his devoted wife, Jelka Rosen the painter as she had been, the whole of Eric Fenby's account of the later years as he knew them, are but two sources. Fenby, like Heseltine, was at first swallowed whole in the composer's spider's web. Sir Thomas Beecham's account of his early relations with Delius give a short but clear picture of both composer and man in this aspect of his qualities. Beecham *(A Mingled Chime)* writes: 'Delius in his own way was a complete man, carved by nature in a clear and definable piece out of the rough and shapeless stone of her raw material; a signpost to others on the way of life, a light to those in darkness; and an unfailing reassurance to all who strove to preserve their faith in those two supreme virtues, honesty and independence.' Beecham came so deeply under the composer's spell that he tended, after the original enchantment, to neglect other living English composers. Sir Arnold Bax (*Farewell my youth,* Longman's, 1943) quotes the conductor as having said after directing a concert of British music during the First World War ('ill-balanced and of unwieldly length,' writes Bax): 'Well, I think we have successfully paved the way this afternoon for another quarter of a century of German music!' In many respects, Beecham confesses he was in hearty disagreement

with Delius' views—two people recognisable as men could hardly be more unalike. Yet Beecham was obsessed to a strange degree by both composer and man, as we can see from the first Delius Festival he sponsored in 1929, twenty-one years after their first meeting, the second Delius Festival of 1946, and the Delius Society Recordings begun in May 1933. In another passage (*ibid.* pp. 111-2) Beecham comments on the difficulty of memorizing the actual notes that the composer wrote—atmosphere, maybe, could be recalled but not the delicate delineation. Is not this, surely, one more example of the man's compelling mind—that, standing outside the taught traditions, not caring for and unstudied by the academic pundits and their pupils, he could still govern our imaginations with indomitable power?

Other similar pictures can be envisaged from the various personal accounts mentioned already, and reference will have, no doubt, to be made to them in ensuing pages. They are not all equally pleasant. Underneath Fenby's love and devotion, beneath his loyal reminiscences, lies a picture of a tyrant; resistance to sickness no doubt caused the tyranny, but its roots were in his blood, his ancestry, his Yorkshire upbringing, his determination (so prolonged) to become a composer of the calibre and characteristics he desired. Cecil Gray *(Musical Chairs)* goes farther than most, calling him 'not a lovable man at the best of times'; but there is much in Clare Delius' pages, much in Gray's own *Peter Warlock*, much in Heseltine's book and the story of his friendship, much indeed in Fenby and Norman O'Neill, to show that Gray's sympathies at the time of his visits to Grez and Delius' at the same period were totally irreconcilable. After commenting on the 'contrast between his art and his personality,' Gray explodes into the description that Delius was 'a violent, bigoted, doctrinaire atheist.' Far be it from me, who did not know the man, to agree with such a down-

right, damning criticism. Behind the too blinding light of its prose, some supporting shadows can be detected. Heseltine once described Delius to me (I cannot after the years quote his word, but see p. 107) as being like a very conventional and straight-laced country parson of the old school, only completely inverted. Fenby rails with some vigour against his deliberately anti-Christian attitude. And one cannot help observing from the Warlock correspondence (as well as from Fenby's book) how prone Delius was to give advice to the young—and with what gusto he did it! In a letter of Jan. 11, 1913, the composer wrote to Heseltine: 'You ask me for advice in choosing between the Civil Service[1], in which you seem to have no interest whatever, and music, which you love. I will give it to you. I think that the most stupid thing one can do is to spend one's life doing something one hates, or in which one has no interest; in other words it is a wasted life. I do not believe in sacrificing the big things of life to any one or anything . . . children always exaggerate the duty they have to their parents. Parents seldom sacrifice anything at all for their children . . . I should advise you to study music . . . Everything depends upon your perseverance. One never knows how far one can go . . . Emerson says in one of his essays . . . something to this purpose, "A man who works with his whole soul at anything whatever will make it a success before he is fifty." and I believe this to be perfectly true. One's talent develops like muscles that you are constantly training. Trust more in hard work than inspiration.'

With due alterations in sentiment, this letter is suspiciously like an old-fashioned Sunday sermon; it has the true homiletic flavour. In 1912 Delius wrote: 'If you want some advice from someone who really likes you and feels real interest in your welfare you can come to me without the slightest restraint. On any subject or question I will

[1] How times have changed!

tell you what I really think, and I can assure you that very few people can tell one what they really think. When they do they are always invaluable.' The bright light thrown by this kind and generous but observably schoolmasterly offer is increased to a higher psychological penetration by a sentence in the same letter that a delay in reply would mean that ' I am occupied with something very absorbing,' the athletic but obsessional exercise of his faculties in the peace of Grez.

If little cause for wonder can be found in Delius and his music or in these preceding words for the absorption of the youth Heseltine into this gigantic but remote swirl of an unharnessed gulf-stream of music, the same pages, and particularly the letters, can give good reason for a violent reaction against it—an attempt to reach shore against the tide under the power of personal swimming. Not one of his teachers—not his first friends—not Delius himself could have reckoned upon the erection of the mask of Peter Warlock. But, in reality, the first dreams lived on under the blazoned (if somewhat historical novel) armour of Elizabethan revelry and bawdry. The raucous mock-adventurous side (that which was Warlock), Delius could never understand. Fenby relates how deeply distasteful to him were Warlock's rowdy friends, though Delius himself was a great lover of good food, good wine, and conviviality at his own table.

Another influence on Heseltine asks for a moment of investigation. Bernard van Dieren (1884-1936) was one of the most remarkable men I have met in my life. A fluent linguist, an expert technician in subjects as remote as mediæval bookbinding and revolver shooting, X-rays and trick-cycling, he combined vast intellectual energy and power with a long continuing and painful debilitation of the body which, having been trained as a doctor in Holland, he only too well understood. Van Dieren wielded

a potent force on Heseltine and on others of his generation—it is not this study's task to assess its moral, or even its intellectual, value. He had an almost Yogi-like capacity for attaining 'calm peace, and quiet'; in this way he could be ranked aside Delius. But whereas Delius' music put emotion foremost and intellect behind, van Dieren's method of composing was almost the opposite. His scores are among the most complex in pattern of our times, for he was a master of contrapuntal device. They do not lack emotion, on the other hand, but they express that emotion in the most distantly intellectual, almost astronomical terms.

The new friendship that sprang up between Heseltine and van Dieren had a marked effect on the former. The Delius influence had been mainly harmonic; that of the French-English-Dutchman was melodic and contrapuntal. Heseltine-Warlock had discovered, not merely by studying scores of older and newer masters, a different approach to the art of composing music from that which had obsessed him since the days of his mid-teens. Under this influence, reports Gray *(Peter Warlock)* ' a sudden complete change took place. He [Warlock] learnt to purify and organize his harmonic texture by means of contrapuntal discipline, and the thick, muddy chords which characterized the early songs gave place to vigorous part-writing.'

I have never felt that the influence of van Dieren outweighed the influence of Delius in the run of Heseltine's life. I have no doubt, in my own mind, that the Warlock legend was partly an unconscious sub-creation of Delius', and that the growth of it was assisted, almost semi-unconsciously, by the strange mind of van Dieren. Perusal of Gray's life of the dual man helps to tell one, but (I speak from personal knowledge) even there, frank though that book seems to be, much is omitted.

The fact remains with us that Philip Heseltine wrote this book about Frederick Delius in love—a prose-poem

invaluable, unrepeatable. We may, as an aside, glance at some other indications that linked the aspirant boy and the achieving man into a lasting friendship. First is the untiring diligence with which Heseltine made arrangements and transcriptions of Delius' works. The second is the admirable skill and fitness of those arrangements. The third is Heseltine's own string-piece—the *Serenade*—designed as a tribute in 1923 to Delius on his sixtieth birthday. This short but exquisite work could not have been written by one who did not know and admire the works of Delius: but is that not suitable? It is *in toto* unlike in the extreme to Delius' music, an individual work by a most personal composer, yet, in its very idiom, it pays a high compliment to a beloved friend and an admired master.

Introducing these forthcoming pages to the reader (if he has read so far), I suggest that in them we find the true soul of Philip Heseltine, before it was overlaid by the Frankenstein-like Peter Warlock: that it was this beautiful young spirit who sought Delius and whom Delius delighted to try to guide; and that, for these reasons—whatever other book may appear with later, more intimate, even more important information contained between its covers—this study by Heseltine will remain a work of art, one that through its affection and sympathy reveals Delius as no other and later book can. I commend it to the lover of Delius' music, in the hope that he will enjoy it for as many years as I have.

FREDERICK DELIUS

by

Peter Warlock

I

DELIUS' LIFE

'And masculine is found to be
Hadria, the Adriatic sea.'

IT seems an arbitrary decision, but there is an air of predestined finality about it that carries conviction and seems to forbid further inquiry. As an equally mysterious contingency one records the fact that Frederick Delius is a Yorkshireman, born at Bradford, on January 29th, 1863; and those whose especial hobby it is to theorize about the influence of nationality upon art may exercise their ingenuity upon the strange fact that, of the three men who stand for all that is best in their respective arts in the England of today, two are Englishmen by naturalization—Jacob Epstein, the sculptor, Joseph Conrad, one of the greatest masters of prose that have ever employed the English language, and the third, Frederick Delius, English by virtue of his father's naturalization. His family history does not support the picturesque and appropriate notion that his name is derived from the traditional home of Apollo. It is simply a Latinized form of Delij—for the family is of Dutch origin—the termination signifying no more than a desire to give a scholastic appearance to a name associated for many generations with spiritual pastors and masters. The Deliuses seem to have been ever a restless and adventurous clan, for already in the sixteenth century we find branches of the family in England (Gualter Delius, a friend and associate of Philip Melanchthon), in Malaga, and in Messina. The direct ancestry of the com-

poser can be traced back to one Johannes Delius, who was *Pastor* at Kleinenbremen-bei-Minden from 1604 to 1634. His son, grandson, and great-grandson were all in the Church, and tracing the pedigree through Daniel Conrad Delius (1697–1768) who was *Bürgermeister* of Versmold, and Carl Ludwig (1750–1810) who held the post of superintendent in the little town of Heepen, we come to the composer's grandfather, Ernst Friendrich Delius (1790–1831) who served under Blücher in the Napoleonic wars, was wounded at the battle of Ligny, and ended his days as *Bürgermeister* of Bielefeld in the province of Westphalia. He was very musical, as the saying is, and would have become a musician, had circumstances not compelled him to follow the profession of law. His second son, Julius (1822–1901), came to England at an early age to join his elder brother Ernst, who was already established in a business in Manchester. In the course of time, he started a business of his own in Bradford, became a naturalized Englishman in 1850, and in 1856 married Fräulein Krönig of Bielefeld, who was only seventeen years of age at the time of her marriage. The earliest recollections of Frederick, who was their second son, are best given in his own words:

'My father loved music intensely and used to tinker on the piano when he knew he was alone. He was a great concert-goer and he often had chamber music in the house. My mother was not musical at all, but she had great imagination, and was rather fantastically inclined. She was very romantic, and out of the smallest episode would invent a wonderful story, which she then came thoroughly to believe. My brother, Max, and I used to buy "penny-dreadfuls," such as *Dick Turpin, Sixteen-string Jack,* and *Sweeny Todd, the Barber of Fleet Street*—in this tale the barber's customers used to disappear through a trap-door, and were taken away to be converted into pork-pies! We used to read these books in bed when we were supposed to

be asleep, and we had a contrivance to turn the gas up or down by means of a string. Once, my mother caught us in the act and confiscated a whole pile of these penny-dreadfuls. A few days later we surprised her, with a very red and excited face, poring over them herself. We lived in a house called Claremont, Horton Lane, which was, at that time, out of the town and on the edge of the moors, on the road that leads towards Bingley. We children had two ponies and I loved riding over the moors to Ilkley—then only a tiny village—where we often spent the summer. Once, my brother Max, who was two years younger than myself, and I, after reading some extraordinary story, ran away from home so as to have an adventure. I was then about eight years old. We actually got up one morning at four o'clock, having previously laid in a store of necessary provisions, which consisted chiefly of sweets, and made our way on foot across the moors to Ilkley. We arrived there late in the afternoon; it was beginning to rain, and our prospects looked very miserable, when we were suddenly confronted by a friend of the family, who knew us very well and wondered what we were doing there. Our confused answers must have made him suspicious, for he took us to the railway station, telegraphed to our parents, and handed us over to the guard of the Bradford train.

'As a little boy, I used to take sudden and violent dislikes to people, and developed a strange habit of going to visit quite unknown people, to whom I had taken a fancy. One of my great likes was a sailor-lad who sometimes came to Bradford. He belonged to a big merchant-vessel and I loved to hear him talk about his travels in strange lands and seas. His departure on a fresh voyage always filled me with envious sadness. I cannot remember the first time when I began to play the piano: it must have been very early in my life. I played by ear, and I used to be brought down in a little velvet suit after dinner to play for the company. My

mother would say: "Now make up something," and then I improvised. When I was six or seven, I began taking violin lessons from Mr. Bauerkeller, of the Hallé Orchestra, who came over from Manchester especially to teach me. Later on, I had another teacher, Mr. Haddock from Leeds. My first great musical impression was hearing the posthumous Valse of Chopin which a friend of my father's played for me when I was ten years old. It made a most exrtaordinary impression on me. Until then, I had heard only Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and it was as if an entirely new world had been opened up to me. I remember that after hearing it twice I could play the whole piece through from memory.'

Other musical impressions of the early seventies that are specially recalled are the hearing of Grieg's *Humoresken,* a performance of the *Walkürenritt* under Sir Charles Hallé, and a performance of *Lohengrin* at Covent Garden. These predilections are particularly interesting by reason of the fact that there was no dearth of good music in the family circle. Julius Delius would often entertain at his house the artists who came to Bradford to give a public concert; and musical soirées at Claremont were of frequent occurrence. Joachim and Piatti were among the musicians with whom Frederick was thus brought into contact at an early age; and his father's passion for chamber music brought the quartet parties and other players from Manchester, Leeds, and the neighbourhood, to the house at regular intervals. To his son, however, this surfeit of good things became a little wearisome, and developed in him a distaste for chamber music which lasted for many years. Even now, it is evident that while Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven command his respect, his love and enthusiasm are reserved for Chopin, Wagner, and Grieg, the only composers who have perceptibly influenced the formation of his own style.

The young Delius, after a few years' attendance at the

Bradford Grammar School, was sent to the International College at Spring Grove, Isleworth.[1] He spent three years at this institution (1876-9). He confesses to having been neither diligent nor quick at learning. He had no aptitude whatever for mathematics: the only subjects that interested him were geography, which stirred the *Reiselust* in him, and French and German, of which he had already acquired a fair knowledge in his childhood. He was a keen cricketer, however, and in his last year won the prize bat for the best average during the term. He continued his violin lessons, while at Isleworth, with a Mr. Deichmann and had special permission to join an amateur orchestra, conducted by a Mr. Sommers, which rehearsed at Chiswick once a week. At this time, he was confirmed by the Bishop of London, and he recalls the fact that he was seized with an uncontrollable fit of laughter just before his turn came to receive the laying-on of hands. It had been decided that Frederick should enter his father's business—which dealt with wool imported from Australia—and on leaving Spring Grove he returned to Bradford and took his place in the office. The work proved most uncongenial to him and the lack of any intellectual or artistic life in Bradford depressed him greatly.

After a few months, his father arranged that he should go to Chemnitz, in Saxony, as a *volontaire* in the big manufacturing firm of Wilhelm Vogel. The firm derived scant benefit from his services, nor did his knowledge of business methods perceptibly increase. But the free life in the German town proved delightful after the dull monotony of Bradford. There was a good theatre in Chemnitz where opera was performed as well as drama; and there were excellent orchestral concerts every week. Violin lessons were continued with Hans Sitt, who was later on to become

[1] See Maurice Hewlett, "The Gods in the Schoolhouse" *(English Review:* December, 1912.)

Delius' violin-master at the Leipzig Conservatorium, and time was found to visit Dresden, where the young musician was greatly impressed by a performance of Carl Goldmark's *Königin von Saba,* and Berlin, where he heard for the first time *Die Meistersinger*—a far greater revelation. He returned to Bradford in the spring of 1881, but before many weeks had passed he persuaded his father to send him to Sweden on business connected with the firm. So, on June 1, he embarked at Hull, on a steamship bound for Gothenburg. This first visit to Scandinavia was a great event in his life, and the affection he developed for these northern countries and their people—heightened by his subsequent friendship with some of their greatest men—has led him to spend some weeks of every year there ever since. After a few days at Gothenburg, he went to Norrköping, where business was to be transacted, and there he succeeded in getting so many orders for the firm that his father was surprised and delighted at the apparent blossoming of his commercial abilities. Owing, no doubt, to his youth and to the ingenuous charm of his personality, he was well received wherever he went, and orders poured in for the firm.

When he reached Stockholm, he quite abandoned himself to enjoyment of the lovely surroundings and the gay life of the city; and what with supper-parties, excursions by land and water, picnics, impromptu concerts in the open air, and above all the entrancingly lovely summer nights, business receded far into the background, and Stockholm seemed like Paradise after dingy Bradford, with its third-rate theatre and sordid amusements. So business was completely forgotten for a while, and an extended tour in Norway, ending up at Bergen and in no way connected with the buying and selling of wool, was the cause of considerable friction with the family, when the truant returned to England in the autumn. But, in consideration of services indubitably rendered at Nörrkoping and elsewhere, he was

forgiven, and a short while afterwards we find him with another agent of the firm at Saint-Étienne, near Lyons. This proved a dull town, with very little going on and no music to be heard. Boredom became quite intolerable and in the following February Delius paid a visit to the Riviera, where he remained for six weeks until recalled to Saint-Étienne by a peremptory telegram from his father. An extraordinary run of luck at Monte Carlo added considerably to his enjoyment of this illicit holiday. Soon afterwards, his father sent him off to Scandinavia on a second business expedition, which, from a commercial point of view, was a most dismal failure, though two months were spent very pleasantly in exploring the many beauties of the two countries. By this time, he had thoroughly made up his mind that business was not his vocation. But there remained the problem of convincing his father of the fact, a task which was more difficult than it might have been had not the elder son, Ernest, a born wanderer, already refused to have anything to do with the business and taken himself off to a sheep-ranch in New Zealand. It was not simply a question of wool or music in Frederick's case. Music as a profession was entirely out of the question, to Julius; despite his appreciation of the musical ability of others, it seemed as absurd for one of his sons to imagine that he could become a musician as to announce his intention of travelling to the moon.

To such people—and they constitute a vast majority—music, and every other art, is a pleasurable luxury; it is impossible for them to conceive it as being a necessary constituent of life. For them it is a relaxation, a relief from the worries of serious business, essentially a thing of leisure hours. It is impossible to convince them that artistic talent cannot be cultivated to the fullest extent in the spare time that remains after the really *important* affairs of the day are over.

In the autumn of 1882, Fred was sent to Manchester to

another firm, in the forlorn hope that he might there develop a more serious interest in the work. But Manchester, though a more agreeable place than Bradford, did not heighten his taste for a commercial career. A trip to Paris 'on business' in the following year proved as abortive as the second excursion to Scandinavia—and indeed one is inclined to marvel at the long endurance of Julius' touching faith in his son's commercial activities. After this, Fred announced that he had definitely finished with the business and there ensued one of those painful family conflicts which are recorded with such monotonous iteration in the biographies of artists. This unpleasant state of affairs persisted throughout the winter. The elder Delius was resolved that his son should remain in the business and no nonsense about it. The son was determined to escape at almost any price from the artistically chilling atmosphere of the north of England—where the condition of music was very different forty years ago from what it is today. If it were out of the question that he should be allowed to devote himself exclusively to music, it ought, he reflected, at least to be possible to effect a compromise that would secure him an environment and conditions of life which would not prevent or hinder overmuch the development of his musical abilities. He felt instinctively that, in the right surroundings, his soul would expand like a flower in the sun. Meanwhile, in great dejection of spirit, he spent whole days in the library, poring over maps and books of travel, for his *Reiselust* had awakened again. There was in particular an old *Mappa Mundi* which fascinated him, for it seemed still to be full of the glamour associated with the voyages of the first explorers of far-distant countries. The Florida peninsula was always catching his eye; it seemed to be a country where the wild luxuriance of Nature, in one of her most extravagant moods, could be enjoyed in solitude without officious interference on the part of human kind. And so, one day,

after a more than usually violent scene with his father, it dawned upon him that orange-growing in Florida was his true vocation. His father, though he did not immediately acquiesce in this new proposition, was no doubt secretly relieved to find that the horrid notion of becoming a musician had been, for the time at any rate, abandoned; and after what seemed an interminable deal of discussion, hesitation, and delay, it was finally settled that Fred should emigrate to Florida as an orange-planter. Investigations were made, letters of introduction procured, and in March, 1884, he left Liverpool on the Cunarder *Gallia* for New York, proceeding thence by steamer down the coast to Fernandina in Florida.

The Solano grove, where Delius settled, was an old Spanish plantation of some hundred and twenty acres on the edge of virgin forest. There was a little wooden house on a bluff, overlooking the broad St. John's River, and there he lived alone for three months without seeing a single human being, white or black. This was the crucial period of his life. Remote from the false culture and superficial distractions of modern civilization, he was free at last to receive that interior illumination which Nature is always ready to give to those whose hearts have not been hardened by materialism and external trivialities. It is significant that in the lives of almost all great saints and sages, seers and mystics, there has been a period of retirement from the world of activity: and in this period their eyes have been opened to the supersensual world, and they have crossed the frontier of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is at such times that there comes

> . . . that blessed mood,
> In which the burthen of the mystery,
> In which the heavy and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world,
> Is lightened—that serene and blessed mood

> In which the affections gently lead us on,—
> Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
> And even the motion of our human blood
> Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
> In body, and become a living soul:
> While with an eye made quiet by the power
> Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
> We see into the life of things.

It was at this time that Delius first saw clearly where his life's work lay. His vision was no longer blurred by the artificialities of modern life. In his solitary communion with Nature he had found himself and realized that he could trust his own intuition against others' reason. He was, however, rash enough to write triumphantly to his father and tell him that he had now quite definitely made up his mind to devote himself wholly to music. This announcement was interpreted by the old man as another change of front on the part of the young scapegrace, who never seemed to be of the same mind for more than a few months together, nor able to stick to any work he put his hand to. The result was that the orange-grove was promptly purchased outright with a view to preventing further vacillation. Sundry negroes were then requisitioned to attend to the oranges, while the young owner of the plantation continued to revel in the natural beauties of his surroundings, which were of no mean order. Palm trees abounded, and in the forest there were immense magnolias, forty or fifty feet high, whose heavy fragrance, mingled with that of the orange blossom, floated across the river, so that one could sniff it in mid-stream more than two miles from either bank. The shaddock—or grape-fruit—grew wild, and quantities of the fruit lay rotting under the trees. On the higher ground were dense pine-woods, and in the swamps and marshes, which extended for many miles away to the west, grew the hibiscus, yellow-bell jasmine, and trumpet-flowers in wild profusion. And there was no lack of excitement in the daily

round. There were the rattlesnakes which, in the early autumn when they become blind and slough their skins, wander up country from the low-lying ground and will strike at anything that crosses their path.

One evening, when Delius and his negro servant were out in quest of quails, the nigger suddenly seized his master by the arm and jerked him backwards with such violence that his gun went off in the air; he had been on the point of stepping on an enormous rattlesnake, five or six feet in length. Then there were the alligators. They lived in the creeks and swamps adjoining the river and were hunted by three men in a boat in the following manner. One man had the gun, another a strong rope, while the third paddled the boat along, very silently. The man with a gun had a lantern fastened on the top of his head, which acted as a searchlight. The alligator is generally discovered by his eyes, which gleam out of the darkness like two big blood-red rubies. He seems to be fascinated, unable to move when the glare of the lantern is turned upon him, and you can sometime approach within ten yards of him before firing. It is, in most cases, necessary to get very close to him, for the eye is the spot to aim at—unless his mouth happens to be open, which is an unlikely contingency. The boat must always be kept towards the head of the beast, because he can swamp you with one whisk of his powerful tail; and the man with the rope must lasso the alligator as soon as he is shot, or the body will sink like a stone. Delius' best alligator was no less than seven yards long, but an attack of malaria, caught through sitting out late at night in the marshes, compelled him to abandon the sport.

At this time, Delius had already composed one or two little pieces, but his efforts at expressing himself in music had hardly progressed beyond the stage of improvisation. Now that he had determined to devote himself seriously to the study of music, he felt the necessity of having a piano.

So, when he went down the river to the town of Jacksonville, to transact some business connected with the purchase of his estate, he paid a visit to the music-store of Meredy and Payne, to negotiate the hire of an instrument. Now, it happened that while he was trying one of the pianos that were offered to him, there passed by the open door of the shop an individual who was so struck by the beauty of the sounds proceeding from inside that he came in and begged to be made acquainted with the young man who was playing. This individual was Thomas F. Ward, organist of the Jesuit Church of SS. Peter and Paul in Brooklyn, the son of a Spanish priest and an Irish kitchen-maid. He was inclined to consumption and had been sent by the Fathers of his Church to the South, in the hope of restoring his health. It was a romantic encounter. A lively sympathy between the two musicians led to their returning together to the orange grove, with the piano. Ward was an excellent musician, some nine years older than Delius, and it is not too much to say that the whole of Delius' technical equipment is derived from the instruction he received from Ward in the course of his six months' sojourn on the plantation. The young composer developed very rapidly. He worked with a demoniacal energy, and in a short time he had as good a knowledge of musical technique as the average student at the institutions acquires in the course of two or three years. In his teaching, Ward wisely confined himself to counterpoint, seeing that his pupil's natural instincts had already provided him with a finer sense of harmony than could ever be gained from text-books and treatises.

Delius still maintains that harmony is a thing of instinct alone; harmony came naturally to him when he was a little boy and his harmonic sense developed naturally in his early manhood, so that, when he came later on to study what is falsely called the science of harmony at Leipzig, he found it narrow, mechanical, and unreasonable. Counterpoint is

the basis of the flow, the movement, the rhythm—in the proper sense, meaning the interdependence and balance of parts as movement in their relation to the whole—in music. Harmony, like Beauty, is little more than the successful event of clear thinking in sound. It is a result rather than a process of expression. And yet it is difficult for us, at the present day, to realize that up to the close of the sixteenth century, when what is known as the polyphonic period of music came to an end, the vertical relation of two or more voices—that is to say, the sum total of sound obtained by dropping an imaginary perpendicular across two or more lines of melody and thus arresting their flow—was an aspect of music that was never considered *per se*. The concept of chords as such had not yet developed. There are many pages of Palestrina, for example, which seem to us to consist of simple sequences of chords; but Palestrina wrote these passages as independent melodies in an ordered interrelation, from which their *harmony* or fitting-together naturally resulted. The Middle Ages, of course, were no less prolific of theorists who attempted to lay down definite laws, which should govern this interrelation, than succeeding centuries have been. But we must not forget that performance has always preceded theory in music; and to regard harmony as a natural instinct, in Western peoples, would enable us to realize more clearly than we do at present how the composers of the polyphonic period contrived to write what we regard as harmony before the concept of harmony[1] as such had defined itself in the human mind. This view of harmony as an instinct is corroborated by the fact that harmony was undoubtedly practised by the

[1] The improvement and increasing use of keyboard instruments which enabled one man to perform music that had previously necessitated three or four separate voices doubtless played a great part in developing the concept of harmony, viewed as sequence-of-chords, in the late sixteenth century; and the faculty of improvisation has since greatly stimulated the growth of a definitely harmonic sense.

musically uncultured long before it made its appearance, even as a contrapuntal derivative, in any written compositions or treatises that have come down to us. We know, for example, that the country-folk in Wales and in Northumbria were heard singing in many parts as early as the twelfth century.

Delius speaks with admiration of the musical instincts of the negroes who worked on his plantation. One of them possessed the astonishing faculty of whistling passages in thirds, and all took a keen delight in singing. It is unlikely that any of them had ever heard any music other than their own traditional songs, yet when these were sung in chorus inner parts would be improvised with extraordinary taste and skill. Their harmony was not that of the hymn-book—with which such negro melodies as have been published are almost invariably associated—but something far more rich and strange which aroused the enthusiasm of Delius and baffled Tom Ward's attempts to analyse it by any methods known to the theorists.

The only musical treatise read by Delius at this time was that of Berlioz on the orchestra; but that is more like a romance than a text-book, and, although the list of possible shakes on the bassoon may be out of date, it is still one of the most suggestive and inspiring volumes that can fall into the hands of a young musician. Though Delius learned much that was valuable from Ward's precept, he learned even more from his admirable performance of the great masters—especially Bach, of whom his knowledge equalled his love—on the piano at the plantation and on the organ of a Roman Catholic Church in Jacksonville, which was occasionally visited for this purpose. After a while, however, Delius began to feel the need of a more specifically musical environment. He wanted to hear more music, to mix with other composers and exchange ideas with them; and he felt—mistakenly enough as he afterwards realized

—that there were professors in Germany who could teach him more of musical technique than the admirable Ward, whose modesty in respect of his own attainments probably fostered this erroneous notion. So he wrote again to his father, begging for permission to leave the plantation—for a little while, at any rate—and go to Leipzig to study composition at the Conservatorium. This request met with a flat refusal, but the musician had made up his mind that, father or no father, he would somehow contrive to get to Germany. At this point, Providence again stepped in in the form of his elder brother who arrived suddenly from Australia and agreed to take over the estate. He left it soon afterwards, as abruptly as he had come, and was next heard of in Sumatra.

The immediate problem which confronted the younger Delius was to secure financial independence. He left the Solano grove in August 1885 and went to Jacksonville, where, with the assistance of Ward, he set up as a music-teacher, and managed to add to his slender resources by singing in the choir at the local synagogue, and, on occasions, playing the organ. After six weeks of this not very profitable employment, a friend drew his attention to a newspaper advertisement of a certain Professor Ruckert of Danville, Virginia, who wanted a music-master for his two daughters. There was apparently no capable musician in Danville, and the terms of engagement were that the applicant should receive free board and lodging in return for instructing the young ladies and that the Professor would do his utmost to secure him other pupils in the neighbourhood.

Delius applied for the post, and backed by glowing testimonials from Ward and the Chief Rabbi of Jacksonville,[1] obtained it. The distance from Jacksonville to Dan-

[1] A piece of astonishing altruism, seeing that Delius has no Jewish blood.

ville is more than five hundred miles, and Delius had barely enough money for the journey. But he took a steamer up the coast as far as Charlestown (South Carolina) and proceeded thence by train to Danville, where he arrived in the middle of the night, with but one dollar in his pocket. The Professor was at the station to meet him, a gaunt figure with a carrot-red goatee, veritable incarnation of the cartoonist's Uncle Sam. In the matter of pupils he had been as good as his word, for he had already secured several and next morning there appeared in the local newspaper a flamboyant advertisement, which heralded the arrival of 'Professor' Delius, the eminent violinist and composer, and ended a long panegyric of his artistic virtues by expressing a hope that the folk of Danville would avail themselves of this unparalleled opportunity to become initiated into the mysteries of the violin, piano, harmony, counterpoint, form, etc., etc. 'Professor' Delius did not belie the reputation thus thrust upon him. He was indeed at this time a very capable violinist—shortly after his arrival in Danville, he performed the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto with conspicuous success at a concert given by the Young Ladies' Baptist College—and on the piano he had developed, all untaught, a very efficient technique of his own, which was destroyed at Leipzig when it became necessary for him to learn the orthodox technique of piano-playing.

Life at Danville passed pleasantly enough. His pupils consisted chiefly of the daughters of wealthy tobacco-planters, and in a short time he had made quite a respectable sum of money and achieved great popularity. Meanwhile, his parents, who had had no news of him since he left the plantation in the preceding year, became alarmed at his prolonged silence, and caused inquiries to be made about him in Jacksonville, whence they learned he had long since disappeared. This period of anxiety seems to have convinced them that he was in earnest in his resolve to

become a musician, and as soon as his whereabouts had been discovered, his mother wrote begging him to come home and telling him that his father had relented and that he would be allowed to go to Leipzig as he desired. Danville was loath to lose him, but he was not slow to grasp his long-desired opportunity. He reached New York about the middle of June, and after spending ten days on Long Island with an old Isleworth friend, sailed for Liverpool in the *Aurania,* making the acquaintance of David Bispham on the voyage.

By the beginning of August, he was established in Leipzig, in one small room on the top story of a house in Harcourtstrasse—*cimex lectularius* caused him to beat a hasty retreat from his first lodging. Here he seemed to be in the very centre of musical activity. He entered the Conservatorium as a student (it was then in the old building in the Neumarkt, though the new one near the Gewandhaus was opened shortly afterwards) and attended the classes of Hans Sitt, Reinecke, whom he remembers as a beautiful Mozart player and a cultured musician despite the limitations of his taste, and Jadassohn, who was neither a beautiful player nor a cultured musician. Among his fellow-students were Édouard Schilsky, who was regarded everywhere as the rising genius; Percy Pitt and Ernest Hutcheson : and Robin Legge, though not a student at the Conservatorium, was resident in the city. During this first year at Leipzig, Delius, like many another student, intoxicated with his own enthusiasm, thought of little else but music; all his days and a good part of his nights were spent in hearing music, writing music, playing music, and talking music.

There were the Wagner performances at the opera-house, where Nikisch and Mahler shared the task of conducting. After a *Tristan* performance at the opera, the students were usually in no mood to attend a counterpoint lecture

at the Conservatorium at eight o'clock the next morning; and it was one of Reinecke's little jokes, when he came into the lecture hall and faced a solitary student, to exclaim: 'Es ist wohl wieder *Tristan* gewesen!' Then there were the orchestral concerts at the Gewandhaus, where, during Delius' student-days, Brahms and Tchaikovsky conducted performances of their own works, and the chamber concerts at the Kammermusiksaal, where the fine performances of the Brodsky Quartet taught Delius to appreciate the later quartets of Beethoven. It was here, too, that he first met Busoni, who had come to Leipzig for the first performance of one of his string quartets. His visit coincided with that of Tchaikovsky, and Delius recalls Tchaikovsky's irritation at the 'classicality' of Busoni's work. In the summer of 1887, Delius went for a solitary walking-tour in the south of Norway, and in the following autumn—having by this time a very good knowledge of the Norwegian language—he made the acquaintance of several Scandinavian musicians in Germany. He spent much of his leisure hours in the company of Christian Sinding, and when Grieg arrived towards the end of the year the three became almost inseparable companions.

The influence that Grieg had already exercised on the susceptibilities of Delius through his music was greatly enhanced by his lovable personality; a lasting intimacy sprang up between the two composers, and when Grieg died, twenty years later, Delius felt that he had lost his best friend. On Christmas Eve, 1887, Grieg gave a party, to which Sinding, Halvorsen, and Delius were invited. Each had brought with him a new composition, which was to be played and criticized by the company after supper—Delius' work was a *Schlittenfahrt* for orchestra—but the good cheer and general festivity of the occasion prevented the realization of this project.

It was in the early spring of 1888 that Delius first heard

one of his compositions performed. This was an orchestral suite entitled *Florida*. For a large barrel of beer the services of an excellent orchestra of sixty performers were secured; the players assembled in the large hall of the Restaurant Rosenthal early in the morning, and under Hans Sitt's direction rehearsed the work for nearly two hours. Sinding and Grieg, who comprised the audience, expressed their admiration for the work in the warmest terms. Soon afterwards, Delius accompanied Grieg to London, where the latter was due to give some concerts at St. James' Hall. Delius' *père* was also in London, and seized the opportunity of pointing out to his son the futility of wasting more time and money on the pursuit of music. Where, he would like to know, were the *results* of his eighteen months in Leipzig? What had he to show for them? Exactly what it was that the old man expected to be shown, or what kind of results would have appeased his anger, it is a little difficult to know. But, fortunately, Grieg was at hand, and he was already something of a celebrity; a little dinner-party at the Hotel Metropole was arranged and Grieg's whole-hearted praise of his son's ability could not fail to soften the old man's heart. Had it not been for his generous and kindly intervention on the part of Grieg, Delius' allowance—slender enough at all times, considering the wealth of his father—would probably have been cut off and the composer on the threshold of his career would have had no choice but to return to Bradford and the office stool.

The meanness of Delius' father was, however, atoned for by the generosity of his Uncle Theodore, who had developed a great liking for his musical nephew. Delius spent the summer of 1888 with his uncle in Paris, and later in the year took a small cottage in Ville d'Avray, close to the lake. In the following spring, he moved to Croissy, a village on the Seine, where he remained a year and a half, at the end of which time he settled down in Paris in a

pleasant flat in the neighbourhood of the Lion de Belfort (33 Rue Ducouedic) which he occupied for more than six years. Unlike the majority of young artists, Delius did not come to Paris to develop and indulge an abnormal taste for absinth, venery, or sartorial eccentricities. He led a very quiet life and got through a prodigious amount of work. Three operas, a string quartet, a sonata for violin and piano, two orchestral works as well as a large number of songs and smaller pieces date from this period. He was technically proficient and sure of his own imaginative powers. But his admirable faculty of self-criticism did not allow him the luxury of mistaking the exuberance that comes with the first consciousness of creative ability, well equipped for its executive task, for a complete and absolute manifestation of mature genius; and, with the exception of a few of the songs, scarcely any of the compositions of this period have been published or indeed performed—though many musical reputations of the present generation have grown up on a far less worthy foundation.

Delius did not associate himself with musical circles in Paris: in fact, he rather avoided them, though a few of the younger French composers were among his acquaintances.[1] Florent Schmitt and Ravel, in particular, knew and admired his work at this time; Schmitt made the piano transcriptions of his first two operas *Irmelin* and *The Magic Fountain* in 1893, and Ravel performed the same office for *Margot-la-Rouge* some years later. But it was among the painters and literary men rather than the musicians that Delius found kindred spirits and true friends, chiefest and best of whom was Jelka Rosen, who became his wife and, with her unfailing sympathy and devotion, allied to materially practical as well as great artistic and literary

[1] Of the older generation of composers, André Messager, whom he frequently met at his Uncle Theodore's house, used to express his liking for Delius' fairy opera *Irmelin* in the most cordial manner.

abilities, has ever proved an ideal companion and helpmate to him. Of the rest, particular mention must be made of August Strindberg, Paul Gauguin, and Dr. Encausse—better known under his pen-name of 'Papus'—with whom Delius collaborated in a curious little pamphlet entitled *Anatomie et Physiologie de l'orchestre* (Chamuel: 1894).[1]

'I met Strindberg,' writes Delius, 'at the studio of Ida Eriksen, a Swedish sculptress married to William Mollard, a Franco-Norwegian composer. Later on I saw him quite frequently at the *crèmerie* of the Mère Charlotte, in the Rue de la Grande Chaumière (Montparnasse) where artists received unlimited credit. Paintings were sometimes accepted in lieu of payment and at one period six or seven magnificent Gauguins were to be seen on the walls. It was a little place of the utmost simplicity, where hardly ten people could sit down at a time and where one's meal generally cost one franc, or one franc fifty, including coffee. Strindberg lived in a *pension de famille* just opposite, at No. 12. Among the habitués of the Mère Charlotte at that time were Strindberg, Gauguin, Mucha, a Czech designer of decorations and *affiches*, Leclerc, a poet, a Polish painter named Slivinsky, the *maître de ballet* from the Folies-Bergères—also a Czech—and myself. I lived at Montrouge and generally took my meals at home, but I occasionally lunched or dined at the *crèmerie* to meet Gauguin and Strindberg. Or I would sometimes fetch Strindberg for a walk in the afternoon and we would go through the Luxembourg Gardens and around the Panthéon, up the Boulevard Raspail and down the Boulevard St. Michel, turning down the Boulevard St. Germain towards St. Germain des Prés, then up through the Rue de Tournon, the Galeries de

[1] Long since out of print and now quite unprocurable. Delius is inclined to regard it as a youthful indiscretion, but it is very favourably referred to in Paul Gilson's *Le tutti orchestral*. I have unfortunately not been able to see a copy of this pamphlet.

l'Odéon, and back through the Luxembourg Gardens. Another favourite walk of ours was to the Jardin des Plantes. Strindberg was greatly interested in monkeys, and had a theory that the gorilla was descended from the union of a shipwrecked sailor and a female monkey. He was also occupied with alchemy at that time and claimed to have extracted gold from earth which he had collected in the Cimitière Montparnasse. He showed me pebbles entirely coated with the precious metal and asked me to have one of these samples analysed by an eminent chemist of my acquaintance. My friend examined it and found it to be covered with pure gold. He was hugely interested and expressed the desire to make Strindberg's acquaintance. So I arranged a meeting in my rooms for a certain Wednesday afternoon at three o'clock. My friend arrived quite punctually, but we waited an hour in vain for Strindberg. At a quarter past four a telegram arrived, bearing these words: "I feel that the time has not yet come for me to disclose my discovery—Strindberg." The scientist went away very disappointed, saying to me: "Je crains que vôtre ami est un farceur." Another day Strindberg told me that he had discovered a way of making iodine at half the usual cost, and that he had inspired an article in the *Temps* about this new method. The article created an immense sensation, especially in Hamburg, where iodine seemed to be almost monopolized, for in one day iodine dropped forty points on the Hamburg Exchange. Unfortunately nothing more was ever heard of this affair. Shortly after Paul Verlaine had died, Strindberg showed me a large photograph of the poet on his death-bed and asked me what I saw on it. I answered candidly that I saw Verlaine lying on his back, under rather a thick eiderdown, only his head and beard being visible; and a pillow that had fallen on the floor and was lying there rather crunched up. Strindberg, however, asked me, did I not see the huge

animal lying on Verlaine's stomach and the imp crouching on the floor? At the time, I could never really make out whether he was quite sincere or merely trying to mystify me. However, I may say that I believed implicitly in his scientific discoveries at that time. He had such a convincing way of explaining them and was certainly very ambitious to be an inventor. When Röntgen rays had just been discovered and first began to be talked about, he confided to me one afternoon over an absinth at the Café Closerie des Lilas that he himself had discovered them ten years ago. His interest in spiritualism caused Leclerc and me to play a trick on him. I asked them both to my rooms one evening, and after dinner we had a séance of table-rapping. The lights were turned down and we joined hands round a small table. After ten minutes' ominous silence, the table began to rap and Leclerc asked it what message the spirits had for us. The first letter rapped out was M, and with each letter Strindberg's interest and excitement seemed to increase, until the momentous word MERDE had been spelled in its entirely. I do not think he ever quite forgave us for this. It was at this time that Strindberg wrote his *Sylva Sylvarum*. He was extraordinarily superstitious, and often in the course of our walks he would suddenly refuse to go up a certain street on the pretext that some accident or misfortune was awaiting him there. He was constantly imagining that attempts were being made to assassinate him by occult or other means.[1] On one occasion Edvard Munch, the Norwegian painter, and I called on him at his rooms in the Rue d'Arras. He was poring over his retorts, stirring strange and evil-smelling liquids, and after chatting for five or ten minutes we left him in most friendly manner. Next day Munch received a post card from him: "Your attempt to assassinate me by the —— method has failed.

[1] For Strindberg's own account, see his *Inferno*.

Tak for sidst" : and when Przbcchevsky and his wife, old friends of Strindberg's, arrived in Paris, he confided to me that they had only come to kill him. Several of us would often foregather at night in Mollard's studio, and when we left, our host would accompany us downstairs in order to empty their *boîte à ordures* and give their dog a little fresh air and exercise. Strindberg had been great friends with this couple and had been taking his meals with them for a couple of months at least. It appears that he was there alone one night, it was getting late and they were evidently very tired, when the hostess suggested "si nous descendions la boîte à ordures," a ceremony which had become quite a well-known institution. Strindberg went down with them and said good night in his usual friendly way; but he never entered their house again, having taken the allusion to the *boître à ordures* as a personal insult to himself. Shortly after Munch's supposed attempt on his life, I went away to Norway and on returning heard that Strindberg had left Paris for Sweden. I never saw him again.'

Gauguin had returned from Tahiti on what was to prove his last visit to Paris and had taken a studio in the Rue Vercingétorix. His genius was quite unrecognized save by a little group of his intimate friends and the exhibition of the paintings he had brought back with him from the South Seas in 1893 attracted little attention and few buyers. Delius, who had just received a small legacy at this time, gave him 500 francs (approximately £20) for the large 'Nevermore' (which Gauguin referred to in a letter written some years later as one of his best works) and this sum—paltry though it seems when we consider that the present value of the picture is about a hundred times as much—was considered generous, and indeed was considerably in excess of what Gauguin would have asked for the work. The legacy which made this purchase possible had been bequeathed by the good Uncle Theodore, who in the year

before his death had secured the first public performance of one of his nephew's works. This was an orchestral work *Sur les cimes*[1] (inspired by Ibsen's poem *Paa vidderne*), which was performed at Monte Carlo in the winter of 1893. It was about this time that Delius' second opera *The Magic Fountain*—a three-act work for which he wrote the text himself—was accepted by Eduard Lassen for production at the opera-house at Weimar. The parts were copied, the text was translated into German, and preparations for the performance were actually being made when the composer began to have misgivings about the value of his work. Perhaps he felt, like Strindberg, that the time had not come to disclose his discoveries to the world, for he withdrew the opera and the proposed performance never took place. Such stringent self-criticism, born of the resolve to give out to the world nothing short of the best of which one feels oneself potentially capable, is rare indeed amongst musicians. It is not every day that a chance of seeing one's works mounted at a first-rate opera-house comes along, and to have resisted the temptation for the sake of self-critical scruples implies a degree of artistic conscientiousness which it would be hard to excel. Acquaintanceship with Bergliot Björnsen who was studying with Mme Marchesi in Paris brought Delius an invitation from her father, Björnesterne Björnsen, the poet and dramatist, with whom he spent a summer at Anlestad in Gausdal (Norway). Soon afterwards he met Knut Hamsun and Gunnar Heiberg in Paris, and at the latter's invitation composed some incidental music for his play *Folkeraadet*—'Parliament'—which was produced at Christiania in the autumn of 1897. The spring of the year found Delius back on his estate in Florida, which had never been disposed of, in the company of Halfdan Jebe, a Norwegian violinist and vagabond in the literal

[1] This work should be distinguished from the earlier *Paa vidderne* which was based upon quite different musical material.

sense of the word; and it was during this holiday that he made the first sketches of his Piano Concerto. But he returned to Europe in time to attend the rehearsals of *Folkeraadet*. The play is a satire on the platform-patriotism of politicians. The country being threatened with invasion, it is decided that all the members of parliament shall personally take arms in its defence. With much bombast and heroic posturing they sally forth, but a political dissension arises and the swords that should have been directed against the enemy are turned by the warriors against each other. In the meanwhile, the enemy has been put to flight by a well-timed explosion of dynamite, effected single-handed by an hotel waiter. The discovery of the parliamentary corpses leads to a supposition that the noble fellows have perished in their country's cause, and preparations are made for a public funeral of great splendour. But when the true facts of the 'victory' become known, the funereal mood gives place to one of cynical merrymaking and the waiter is carried through the streets in triumph.

The play, naturally, met with a mixed reception, especial fury being aroused by Delius' satirical metamorphosis of the Norwegian national anthem. One outraged patriot even went so far as to fire off a blank cartridge at the conductor of the orchestra at a subsequent performance by way of protest; and this incident caused Delius to be turned out of his hotel. The play enjoyed a *succès de scandale*; the theatre was sold out every night for six weeks and controversy waxed hot and strong. Delius sought refuge at the Grand Hotel, where every evening at six o'clock Ibsen was to be seen sipping his vesperal whisky. The aged dramatist was much intrigued by the controversy and not a little amused, for he said to Delius: 'We're only barbarians up here in the north.' Finally, the students of the University held a solemn debate on the matter, 'and after due consideration, decided that the musical expression of Norwe-

gian patriotism had not been in any sense ill-used.' So Delius was acquitted and Ibsen expressed his satisfaction 'that the Norwegian students had not disgraced themselves.'

In the meanwhile, Delius scores had been travelling about Germany from one *Kapellmeister* to another. They were generally returned with a letter pointing out that they were technically unplayable; but one conductor merely inserted a slip bearing the laconic inscription: *optisch unmöglich*—'optically impossible,' or to put it more briefly unreadable. There was, however, a conductor in Elberfeld whose eyesight and musical discernment were equal to the task of appreciating the remarkable qualities displayed in these scores. This was Dr. Hans Haym who gave practical proof of his appreciation by performing the Fantasy-Overture, *Over the Hills and Far away,* at a concert of the Elberfelder Concert-Gesellschaft in November, 1897. One is astonished to find that protests were made against the inclusion in the Society's programmes of a work of so 'revolutionary' a nature; for the overture is orthodox enough in form and its harmonic scheme contains nothing that one might imagine would seem unusual to ears well accustomed —as those of the Elberfeld audience were in 1897—to Wagner and the earlier tone-poems of Richard Strauss.[1] But if the work offended sundry members of the town council—who, it is said, threatened to dismiss Dr. Haym from his position if he repeated the offence, which he did, in an aggravated form, though happily with impunity, when he produced the Nocturne *Paris* some years later—it served as Delius' introduction to Professor Julius Buths, of Düsseldorf, who became and remained until his death

[1] In 1912 I heard a German audience hiss lustily after a performance of Debussy's *Ibéria*; and the fact that works by Saint-Saëns, Gounod, and César Franck were well received on the same occasion proves the demonstration to have been prompted by musical and not by 'nationalistic' motives.

an enthusiastic admirer and propagator of Delius' music. This occasion served also to bring Delius into contact with Alfred Hertz—then conductor of the Elberfeld opera-house.

The following year was spent chiefly in Paris, where, amongst other things, the *Nachtlied Zarathustras*, which now forms the final section of *A Mass of Life*, was composed.

The time had now come when Delius could take stock of his achievements with the most conscientiously critical eye and find much that seemed worthy of the standard he had set himself to achieve. He accordingly resolved to give a concert of his works in London, not so much for the purpose of self-advertisement, which he had always avoided, as for the pleasure of hearing several of his larger compositions adequately rendered, and perhaps partly for the satisfaction of finally justifying his musical career in the eyes of his croaking relatives by exhibiting the 'results' they had so incredulously demanded a few years before. The co-operation of Alfred Hertz—who in the meanwhile had migrated to the Breslau opera-house—was secured and the *Kapellmeister* embarked with enthusiasm upon the difficult task of collecting a scratch chorus and orchestra of vast numbers, and coaching recalcitrant soloists.[1] The chorus was obtained by advertisement, all the singers being amateurs with the exception of a few men from the Covent Garden opera chorus. The orchestra mustered ninety-four performers and was led by Delius' old friend Halfden Jebe, who travelled from Norway especially for the purpose. After a good deal of rehearsing (in the course of which one of the soloists invariably had to sing with his fingers in his ears lest he should be distracted by the, to him, out-

[1] It was largely on the strength of the success he achieved at this concert that Hertz secured his appointment as conductor at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. He is now conductor of the San Francisco symphony concerts. [But see further reference on page 150.—Ed.]

landish and incomprehensible sounds proceeding from the orchestra) the following programme was presented on Tuesday evening, May 30th, 1899, at the old St. James' Hall to a fairly large and by no means unappreciative audience which listened attentively from half-past eight until nearly midnight.

PART I

1. Fantasia for orchestra, 'Over the Hills and Far away.'
2. 'Légende,' for violin and orchestra.
(Solo violin: MR. JOHN DUNN.)
3. Third and Fourth movements from Suite for orchestra 'Folkeraadet.'
4. Danish Songs (with orchestral accompaniment).
'Through long, long years.'
'Let springtime come, then.'
'Irmelin Rose.'
'On the seashore.'
'Wine roses.'
(Singer: MLLE CHRISTIANNE ANDRAY.)
5. Symphonic poem for orchestra, 'The Dance goes on.'
6. 'Mitternachtslied.' (From Nietzsche's *Zarathustra.*)
For baritone solo, men's chorus and orchestra.
(Soloist: MR. DOUGLAS POWELL.)

PART II

Excerpts from 'Koanga' (opera in 3 acts with a prologue and epilogue.)

1. (*a*) Prelude to Act III.
(*b*) Quintet and Finale of Act I.
2. Act II.

(Soloists: MME. ELLA RUSSELL, MISS TILLY KOENEN, MR. G. A. VANDERBEEK, MR. WILLIAM LLEWELLYN, and MR. ANDREW BLACK.)

The one-man programme was, at that time, of far less frequent occurrence than it has since become. The concert given two and a half years previously by six young British

composers (Granville Bantock, William Wallace, Arthur Hinton, Erskine Allon, Stanley Hawley, and Reginald Steggall) had proved a sufficiently startling event for the London public, and the Delius concert must have been far more disconcerting. However, the London press critics, all unprepared for the occasion, seeing that not a note of Delius had ever been heard in England before, save perhaps a few early songs which Augeners' had published, acquitted themselves on the whole with far more sanity and sobriety of judgment than they have displayed on many subsequent occasions—though there were, it is true, some displays of the kind of imbecility which has become traditionally associated with the appearance of artistic genius.

The following paragraph from the *Sunday Sun* may be cited as an example: 'It is not easy to associate optimism with a composer who takes for a subject for musical illustration such a work as "Also sprach Zarathustra" by Friedrich Nietzsche.[1] M. Delius' music is bizarre and cacophonous to a degree almost unapproached. There is nothing beautiful in ugliness, though M. Delius evidently is not of my way of thinking. The ugliness of some of his music is really masterly. Oh! if he could be persuaded to look on the brighter side of things, to give us music that would cheer us, not that which blights us as a March wind blights young shoots. If M. Delius may be claimed as one of the rising English school of composers it is his manifest duty "to cheer up." It is so much more easy to be a pessimist than an optimist. His gifts are undeniable. Would that some

[1] For instance:

Lust tiefer noch als Herzeleid.
Weh spricht—Vergeh!
Doch alle Lust will Ewigkeit,
Will tiefe, tiefe Ewigkeit. (!!)

The *Musical Times* described Delius' work as a setting for baritone solo, male chorus and orchestra of an incoherent poem called *Also sprach Zarathustra* by Friedrich Nietzsche.

god would give him the gift to see himself as I see him. I want to be cheered by music, not depressed. Life itself gives one one's share of the blues. Heaven help us if our young composers are going to assist! On the other hand, M. Glazounov is a good deal of an optimist . . .' etc. etc. *The Times* was as hostile to Delius on this as on many subsequent occasions.

The *Morning Post,* however, was very favourable. A brief report which appeared the next morning informed the readers of that journal that ' the concert did not end until so late an hour that we are compelled to postpone our remarks concerning works that are far too important to be dismissed in a few words.' The second notice appeared on June 3rd. ' . . . It is long since we have heard so striking a work [as *The Dance goes on*]. The music palpitates with excitement and sends the blood tingling through one's veins. It is splendidly graphic and intensely engrossing. The *Mitternachtslied* for baritone solo, men's chorus, and orchestra is taken from Nietzsche's *Also sprach Zarathustra,* the work which has inspired one of Richard Strauss's latest symphonic works. Here again Mr. Delius shows himself deeply impressive and original. He does not shrink from employing the strangest and most perilous harmonic progressions . . . We have said enough to show that in Mr. Delius we recognize a musician of very great and noble talent. His music is essentially of to-day, or, rather, of tomorrow, which is all in its favour. That it may speedily make its way is our most earnest wish.'

The *Morning Advertiser* was of opinion that ' Mr. Delius has fully justified his appeal to the musical public, that he has shown himself to be possessed of genuine, we might also add commanding, talent, and that his further acquaintance is eminently desirable.'

The *Daily Mail* found that 'his music has spirit and manliness, imagination and honest feeling.'

The *Westminster Gazette,* referring to the one-man programme, remarked that ' the practice is obviously not without its drawbacks, for the composers, even of established position, are few whose music is capable of withstanding this particular test. But when it brings to light a musician of such signal merit as Mr. Delius these disadvantages may be cheerfully overlooked. Certainly, it may be hoped that enterprising concert managers may no longer allow his unquestionable talents to languish unrecognised . . . He is a musician not only of promise but of achievement . . . . Mr. Delius himself was summoned more than once to acknowledge the applause of an appreciative audience.'

In the *Lady* we read: ' England ought to know something about one of the few composers of genius she has the good fortune to possess . . . I have used the word genius—a rash action—but I think no one present at the Delius concert last week could have had it far from his lips. The bold harmonies and complex details disturbed one at first, but by the end of the concert one was convinced that these were not of the bizarre affectations of a clever young man, but part of an original composer's great design. Mr. Delius' peculiar gift is the welding of apparently irreconcilable musical atoms into an exquisitely simple whole.'

And in the *Pall Mall Gazette* :' We confess to have felt some amazement before this music. There are certain designs which when the eye first looks upon them show nothing but a bewildering multiplicity of detail. Then, as custom brings its happy magic, the unity of the design gradually grows apparent, until one merely wonders that at any time it should have worn a different appearence. Now we will not say that the details of Mr. Delius' style fell at any time last night into a single and coherent design. But after patient and resolute hearing, it became evident that there was growing and ever growing coherence. The extreme origi-

nality of phrasing, the audacious harmonies, the moving of waters (as it may be described) within the depth of the music far below the surface, the obscurity of expression, the daring discords—these things began to unite now and then into such fine single effects that one felt them to be the signs, if not the proof, of something not unlike real greatness.'

In the *Musical Standard* Mr. E. A. Baughan[1] wrote, in the course of a two-page article: 'Personally, I admit that some of Mr. Delius' music sounded discordant to my ears, harsh, uninviting, and ugly. But I could hear that he made it so with a definite purpose in view, and I can quite imagine that I might get to like those discords if I knew them better. That is what happened with Wagner's music . . . Certainly as a critic, I can register my likes or dislikes, but I have no right to say to a composer "You must not speak to me in that tone of voice, I am not used to it." The rebuke is puerile, for that tone of voice to which I object may be part of the very individuality of the composer. But this is surely opening the doors to a crowd of incompetently eccentric composers who rely on arousing our attention by shocking our ears? Is it so indeed? The objection has not much basis in fact, for nothing is easier for a skilled critic[2] than recognizing when a composer is eccentric through want of technique, as Perosi is, and when he is purposely adding to the vocabulary of music as Richard Strauss and this Fritz Delius have added.'

Four years later John F. Runciman summed up the criticisms of this concert by saying: 'The truth was that we didn't know what the devil to make of this music; and most of us were frank enough to say so. That there was

[1] To whose credit it should be remembered that he contributed to the *Nation* the only illuminating article evoked by the production of Arnold Schönberg's *Five Orchestral Pieces* in 1912.

[2] Surviving specimens of this bird have considerably decreased in numbers since 1899, if this be so!

intention, real mastery of notes; that every sound proceeding from the orchestra was meant by the composer; that there was no bungling, not from beginning to end an unanticipated effect—all this every competent critic knew. But the strains sounded unpleasant in our ears.' In the meanwhile, however, Runciman had taken the trouble to make himself better acquainted with this music, and his article concludes by saying that Delius ' has already done enough to justify me in calling him the biggest composer we have produced for many a long day. Seeing that he is cosmopolitan, he can scarcely be claimed for England; but at least he was born here . . . I do not expect, I do not want anyone to accept him as a heaven-sent genius merely on my recommendation; but with a full sense of the responsibility of the situation, I say that those who will take the trouble to hear his music and try to understand it will find themselves well paid for their pains.'

These criticisms have been quoted at considerable length in order to show that, if Delius' music seemed obscure at a first hearing, it was not by any means unfavourably received in this country. Several critics expressed the desire to become better acquainted with it and the audience had shown clear signs of enthusiasm at the concert which may justly be said to have achieved an artistic success. Yet during the next *eight years* no work of Delius was ever performed in England, or even asked for by an English conductor; and it was not until the performances of *Appalachia* (at the Nieder-Rheinisches Musikfest, Düsseldorf) in 1905, *Sea-Drift* (at the Tonkünstlerfest des Allgemeinen Deutschen Musikvereins, Essen) in 1906, and *A Village Romeo and Juliet* at Berlin in 1907 had evoked extraordinary tributes of praise from the German Press that any English concert-giver bethought himself again of Delius. Small wonder that when Theodor Szanto broke the long silence by playing the revised version of his Pianoforte

Concerto in London in 1907 the musical public had almost forgotten his existence. A few weeks later the enterprise of another foreigner—Fritz Cassirer who had succeeded Hertz at the Elberfelder Stadttheater and had conducted *A Village Romeo and Juliet* in Berlin—gave London its first opportunity of hearing *Appalachia.* Early in 1908 Señor Arbos performed *Life's Dance* (a revised version of *The Dance goes on*) at an Albert Hall Sunday concert, and Granville Bantock gave the first performance of *Brigg Fair* at a concert in Liverpool. These, however, were sporadic performances which would probably have led no farther than the concert of 1899 towards a widespread recognition of the composer had there not appeared at this time a young conductor who, if he had done nothing else, would have earned the gratitude of all discerning music-lovers in England for his ten years' splendid championship of the cause of Delius. We are indebted to him for the only performances that have hitherto (1922) been given in England of *A Mass of Life, A Village Romeo and Juliet, Songs of Sunset, North Country Sketches,* and the Epilogue from *Koanga*; and though others have, on rare occasions, performed *Appalachia, Paris, Brigg Fair,* and the two pieces for small orchestra, *On hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* and *Summer Night on the River,* no one has rendered them with a more profound and sympathetic understanding than Thomas Beecham.

He was not content with giving single performances; realizing that the musical public in England must have their attention directed to a new composer times without number before they become aware of his existence, he never let a concert season go by without introducing one or more works of Delius into his programme. His activities in London alone include two separate productions of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (1910 and 1920), two complete performances of *A Mass of Life* (1909 and 1913), two

Delius orchestral concerts (1911 and 1914)[1] besides a large number of performances of individual works, not only at his own orchestral concerts but also at those of the Royal Philharmonic Society, the London Symphony Orchestra, and the National Sunday League. It is not too much to say that but for Beecham the greater part of Delius' output would still be unknown in England today. The lead given by Beecham in his performance of the orchestral works up and down the country has not been followed by other conductors to anything like the extent one might have expected, and that would have been fully justified by the success these works achieved with the public; and the English musical press has been singularly apathetic[2] towards Delius until quite recently. Let me be quite clear on this point. It is not that the critics have failed to notice each new work with a certain amount of appreciation when it was first performed. There have been favourable notices in plenty but no general recognition of the fact that Delius was more than a promising talent amongst many such. Although it was evident from the persistence with which he performed his works that Beecham set more store by Delius than by any other living composer, there was found no critic in England to share his enthusiasm and to help him in his uphill task of familiarizing the public with an

[1] June, 1914, at the Duke's Hall, Royal Academy of Music. It was undoubtedly to this concert that Mr. Edwin Evans referred when he wrote in the *English Review* (September, 1915): 'It is only too apparent that if professional musicians love music at all, which is not always the case, it is emphatically *their* music that they love and nobody else's. Last year the concert-hall of one of our leading institutions was taken for a programme of music by one of the most prominent composers of British birth. Scarcely a single member of the professional staff put in an appearance, and the students abstained with a unanimity which almost suggested that they had been warned.'

[2] The attitude of English critics towards him was wittily summed up a few years ago by Sydney Grew who wrote: 'In Germany, Delius is accepted as a master. Here in England opinion is divided, those who do not know his works disputing the judgments of those who do.'

unknown and somewhat difficult composer by writing not notices of a few lines but articles providing definite information and throwing light on the music.

One cannot reiterate too often that it is the musical critic's business—that is, if he is to merit the title of critic rather than that of mere journalistic hack—not merely to comment on what the public is afforded the opportunity of hearing for itself but to be ahead of the public in his knowledge of music, so as to be in a position to advise the public in advance not only what to go and hear when they get the chance, but what to buy and study in their own homes —since familiarity with contemporary music can hardly be gained in this country from public performances alone. And, incidentally, it must not be supposed that conductors, singers, and performers generally, stand less in need of guidance and advice than the listening public. With the exception of an article in the *Birmingham Daily Post* in 1907 by Ernest Newman (who is also to be credited with an admirable programme-analysis of *Sea-Drift*) I have seen no essay by an English critic inspired by a true sense of Delius' importance and a desire to impart it to the musical public of this country. In thus enlarging upon our indebtedness to Sir Thomas Beecham for the greater part of our knowledge of Delius' works, I have no wish to overlook the excellent performances that have been given by Granville Bantock in the north of England, by Balfour Gardiner and, during the last two or three years, Sir Henry Wood in London. But the credit of establishing Delius' reputation in this country belongs to Beecham alone.

He is unquestionably a man of genius. In the early days of his career he lived for music. He was scarcely ever without a score in his pocket or under his arm—and that his knowledge of the scores he studied was thorough to the last detail is proved by his readiness and ability to conduct a complex work from memory at a moment's notice, if by

some mischance the score has disappeared. This contingency arose at Hanley on one occasion when *Sea-Drift* was to be given. Between the last rehearsal and the time fixed for the performance the score vanished—and such conclusions as can explain the phenomenon may be drawn from the fact that this particular copy has never yet been found. But Beecham, not a whit disconcerted, went ahead with the performance and, in the presence of the composer, gave as fine a rendering of the work as he has ever given with the score in front of him.

It cannot be pretended that Beecham was uniformly successful in his performances of Delius; but his failures were due, not to any lack of musical ability or understanding, but to sheer carelessness and lack of adequate preparation. His genius was such that it would carry him through circumstances that would cause a lesser man to break down completely. Much can be done by taking pains, but genius can do infinitely more than taking pains alone can ever accomplish; and the fact that it can do so much without taking any pains at all tempts it at times to over-estimate its powers. When Beecham took pains over a work of Delius no one could have desired a subtler or more sensitive interpretation. But it is beyond the power of any man to give an authoritative performance of a work with which either he himself, from want of study, or the performers, from want of rehearsal, are not sufficiently familiar. Apparently from the former cause, the first performance of *North Country Sketches* in 1915 failed to do justice to some of the loveliest pages Delius has even written, and manifestly from the latter, the performance of *A Mass of Life* at Covent Garden in 1913 was not merely mediocre but appalling. The unfortunate chorus travelled from the Midlands in the morning, rehearsed all the afternoon—their only rehearsal with the orchestra—and with scarcely an hour's respite, had to tackle this long and exacting work

in the evening. The performance naturally resembled what indeed it was—a second rehearsal held in peculiarly trying circumstances. 'A work of this nature,' as Sir Thomas Browne has said, 'is not to be performed upon one leg.' It may seem ungracious to draw particular attention to these two failures among so many successes, but seeing that neither of the works has yet been performed in London again, it is possible that some who heard them may have blamed the music for the disagreeable effect produced by the performance.

Beecham is a man of extraordinary versatility; so far from being a mere musician, in the technical sense, his interests and indeed his achievements cover a wide field. He is one of the most brilliant talkers of the present day, and not merely brilliant, but lucid and profound at the same time; there are very few subjects to which he has not devoted a good deal of thought and about which he does not hold an individual and finely reasoned opinion. Such breadth of vision and range of intellect are rare qualities among musicians, who are too apt to believe that music springs from other music and not from direct contact with life in all its diversity. But music cannot satisfactorily be one interest among many. Music demands the whole man with all his faculties focused upon it; and in no department of music is this necessity more apparent than in that of opera. We are so accustomed to operatic productions built up of heterogeneous elements thrown together with no synthetic plan, that most of us have lost sight of the fact that opera is a form of art which demands a co-operation between its constituent factors so close that these shall appear to be *functioning* organically in obedience to a single mind. Delius has summed up the matter by saying: 'Every gesture of the actors in my work must be controlled and ordered by the conductor, for my music is conceived in that spirit. Only thus can *the whole* be made comprehensible to the public.

An actor stage-manager will be no good whatever, *for he will make the singers act from the stage and not from the music.*'

Beecham is ideally fitted for this difficult position of conductor-*régisseur*. He has, in addition to his musical attainments, a thorough knowledge and experience of the theatre and the taste to direct, if not actually to execute, the scenic designs: above all, he has the ability to convey his wishes and to impose his will upon all concerned. In some productions he was extraordinarily successful; in others, he was too easily contented with the old departmental system. The 1910 production of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* could scarcely be called a production at all in a theatrical sense. The orchestral playing was superb and the singing passable, but old stock scenery (augmented by an enormous merry-go-round actually hired from a travelling circus for the Fair scene) combined with old stock gestures of the traditionally 'operatrical' order rendered the conception and design of the work wholly unintelligible. The second production, in 1920, was improved by the substitution of scenery which, though still too heavily realistic for the work, had at least the merit of having been specially designed for it; but the action revealed but few traces of the hand of the *régisseur*. Deeply grateful as one must be for the chance of hearing this miraculous work at all, one's gratitude for the musical excellences of the production is tempered by regret for its dramatic defects, which is made the more keen by the reflection that, if there is one man living who understands the character of the work well enough to give us a perfect performance, that man is Sir Thomas Beecham.

The interval of time between the London concert in 1899 and the performances already mentioned, beginning in 1907, which served to reintroduce Delius to the English public, was occupied primarily with the composition of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (1900-1), *Sea-Drift* (1903), and

A Mass of Life (1904-5) and secondarily with the growth of Delius' musical reputation in Germany. In France, though he has made his home in that country for the last thirty years, he is still entirely unknown. On two occasions only have any of his compositions been heard in Paris. In 1901 Mlle. Christianne Andray sang six of the Danish Songs at an orchestral concert of the Société Nationale de Musique conducted by Vincent d'Indy, and in 1913 Beecham gave a performance of *Appalachia.* The nocturne *Paris* has never been heard in the city which inspired it. It was produced at Elberfeld in 1901, and at one of Busoni's concerts of new and seldom-heard works in Berlin in 1902. In 1903 the *Mitternachtslied* was performed at the annual Tonkünstlerfest (held each year in a different centre) at Basle. The spring of 1904 saw the production of *Life's Dance* by Julius Buths at Düsseldorf and of *Koanga* at Elberfeld under Fritz Cassirer's direction, the cast including Clarence Whitehill (Koanga), Max Birkholz (Martinez), Georg Förster (Perez), Rose Kaiser (Palmyra), and Charlotte Lengenberg (Clotilde); and in the autumn Dr. Haym conducted the Pianoforte Concerto (first version, in three movements) at Elberfeld, the solo part being played by Julius Buths. But it was the performance, already referred to, of *Appalachia* and *Sea-Drift* at the music festivals of 1905 and 1906, which won Delius the universal attention and almost unanimous approval of the German press. It was at a Lower Rhine Festival, by the way (in 1902), that Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius,* after having fallen comparatively flat in England, elicited an outspoken tribute of admiration from Richard Strauss which caused Elgar to return home a much greater composer, in the eyes of his compatriots, than he went away. Later in the year *Appalachia* was repeated in Berlin by Oscar Fried. This performance created a profound impression, Busoni, who was amongst those present, being so overcome with emotion that, when he came into

the artist's room to congratulate the composer, he burst into tears.

In February, 1907, came the production of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* at the Komischen Oper in Berlin which, judging from a detailed account by Max Chop in *Kritik der Kritik,* must have been a most grisly affair. As in the London production three years later, the orchestra alone, under Fritz Cassirer, did justice to the work. In June, 1908, the second part of *A Mass of Life* was produced at the Tonkünstlerfest at Munich. William Ritter, in the *Courier Musical,* after referring to Delius as 'le triomphateur de ces fêtes' deplores the omission from the programme of the first part of the *Mass* (to make room for—*inter alia*—a *Flagellantenzug* by one Karl Bleyle!) and concludes 'C'est véritable péché de passer sur une telle œuvre en dix lignes de chronique.' He atones for his sin by a three-page article in another French paper—*Lugdunum,* July, 1908—in the course of which occurs an interesting comparison between Delius and Debussy: 'Ce que Wagner fut à Weber, M. Delius l'est à M. Debussy. Plus complet, plus organique, plus fort, il est tout aussi subtil et multinuancé. Comme lui, il paraît vetu d'arc-en-ciel dilué; une continuelle pâmoison de délicats frottements d'accords nous chatouille délicieusement et, cependant, quelque chose de fort et de salubre règne dans l'ensemble, et l'architecture de l'œuvre connaît une élévation à grandes lignes audacieuses et un plan large et aéré, mais ferme et defini. On sait d'où l'on part, par où l'on va, où l'on aboutit.' In the same year Max Chop's enthusiastic monograph on Delius was published in Berlin, and *Sea-Drift* received its first English performance at the Sheffield Festival, Wood being the conductor and Frederic Austin the soloist.

In 1909 occurred the only two *premières* which Delius has conducted in person—*A Dance Rhapsody* (No. 1) at Hereford (Three Choirs Festival) and *In a Summer Garden*

at a Philharmonic concert in London. The latter work was rewritten after the first performance and was first played in its present form by Emil Mlynarski in Edinburgh in 1913. These experiments and a performance of *Appalachia* which he directed at Hanley convinced Delius that he had no gift for conducting. Like many other composers, he is inclined to listen to the music instead of controlling it. He was further handicapped at Hereford by a severe chill.

There followed in the years 1910 to 1915 the various performances under Beecham that have already been dealt with. In 1910 *Brigg Fair* had its first Continental performance at the Tonkünstlerfest at Zurich and so great was its success that in that year alone it was played by thirty-six different orchestras in Germany. In 1914 arrangements had been made for the production of *Fennimore and Gerda* at Cologne, but the war prevented any further performances of Delius' work in Germany for five years. The opera was finally produced at Frankfurt-am-Main, Gustav Brecher conducting, in November, 1919, and met with a very favourable reception.

In 1899 Delius bought a little property at Grez-sur-Loing, near Fontainebleau, and here he has lived ever since, save for his summer trips to Norway and occasional excursions to England or Germany to attend performances of his work. Grez was a favourite haunt of Robert Louis Stevenson in the 'seventies and in his *Essays of Travel* he has given a charming description of the little village which has hardly changed at all since he knew it: 'It lies out of the forest, a cluster of houses, with an old bridge and an old castle in ruin and a quaint old church. The inn garden descends in terraces to the river, stableyard, kailyard, orchard, and a space of lawn, fringed with rushes and embellished with a green arbour. On the opposite bank there is a reach of English-looking plain, set thickly with willows and poplars. And between the two lies the river, clear and

deep, and full of reeds and floating lilies. Water-plants cluster about the starlings of the low long bridge, and stand halfway up upon the piers in green luxuriance. They catch the dipped oar with long antennæ, and chequer the slimy bottom with the shadow of their leaves. And the river wanders hither and thither among the islets, and is smothered and broken up by the reeds, like an old building in the lithe, hardy arms of the climbing ivy.' Delius' house stands a couple of hundred yards back from the river; its position above the bridge corresponds with that of the inn below it, and between the house and the river there is a little strip of garden, a fish-pond, and a tiny orchard. In such rustic seclusion Delius has lived for over twenty years and it is here that all his best works have been written.

It would be difficult, even if it were justifiable to speak of Delius' personality save in reference to his art, to attempt to make a differentiation between Delius, the man, and Delius, the musician. Art is always greater than the artist through whom it is created, considered simply as an individual; and a knowledge of the irrelevant idiosyncrasies of an artist's daily life is more likely to hinder than to help us in our understanding and appreciation of his work. Anecdotes recording popular and wholly trivial incidents lead to the most unwarrantable generalizations and thus a 'character' of the artist is built up which is not only fictitious but perhaps quite at variance with the spirit of his work. There are, indeed, as we shall see later on, apparent 'false relations' between certain views expressed by Delius himself and the spirit that breathes through much of his best work. But these discrepancies are superficial, arising from the simplicity of his temperament, which lacks the consciously synthetic faculty of harmonizing apparent contradictions, and the self-consciously analytical faculty of reducing everything to its lowest terms which has become perhaps the greatest curse of all the curses modern art is heir to. The real Delius

may be known in his work, and only in his work. It is only the little artist whose personality is more fully revealed in his social than in his creative activities; and it is only the little works of art that are merely the expression of their maker's personality.

II

HIS OPERAS

AMONG the Chippewa Indians of North America, we are told, 'there is no musical notation: a picture of the idea of a song is drawn on a bark-strip, from which another person who has never heard it can sing it accurately.' This, like so much in the art of so-called primitive races, puts us all to shame. We cannot draw a picture of the idea of a piece of music from which another person who has never heard the music can get an accurate impression of it. Yet if there is any purpose in musical criticism, that purpose is surely to convey, by words rather than by pictures, 'the idea of a song' to others who have never heard it.

Our chief enemy is time. We can hold the score of a symphony in our hands, complete and whole and all at once: but to hold the music signified by that score, *the idea of the song,* in the mind in a like completeness and wholeness is a very different and vastly more difficult proposition. When listening to music, we are subject to all the limitations which time imposes: but when we reflect upon what we have heard, when we try to sum it all up and to distil its quintessence, we have to pit ourselves against time in an effort to transcend its inhibitions and its restrictions on the mind. To see a picture of music whole, like a picture, to grasp the rhythm and design not merely of particular sections but of the entire work—and, as the result of this process, to be able to comprehend and share with its com-

poser the complex synthesis of moods and states of mind the work expresses—such is the task of the writer on music. This being admitted, it is painfully apparent that when we speak or write about music—and here the professional critic is in much the same case as the man who tries to record the impressions of his first concert—we embark upon a well-nigh impossible task. Music, for us, only begins where words end: how then can we hope to translate the message of music into words? Only the simplest music yields to our attempts to draw a satisfactory verbal picture of the idea inspiring it. We have lost the art of the old magicians who could compass the universe in a pentacle. One may call music the outward and audible signification of inward and spiritual realities—which seems to suggest that there is something else behind and beyond the music itself that is not the music. Yet are we justified in assuming this separateness? Is it not, in a sense, the expression that makes the thought, the symbol that creates for us the reality, that *is* —as far as we can ever know it—the reality?

The fact is that when we come to the fundamental question of what music really is, we are all—composers, critics, and public alike—very much in the dark. Music's a rum go. Composers cannot tell you themselves how or why they write this or that kind of music, and professional critics are too often inclined to avoid the simpler, fundamental problems of the art, taking refuge either in the current cant of musical journalese, which skilfully proffers the minimum of meaning with the maximum of verbiage, or in technicalities which the ordinary music-lover—who is always more interested in music's relation to life than in its relation to other music—finds more bewildering than the most abstruse specimen of actual composition. Thus, the simplest and most natural questions of the non-musician are apt to prove the most embarrassing to the theorist and the critic who have so long taken these elementary problems for granted as

already solved that they have no answer but gibberish or evasion.

Time was when musical criticism dealt only with external forms: the subject-matter or text or programme of a work, and the technical resources employed in its expression. Now, however, a reaction has set in and an increasing recognition of the absolute independence of every art is apparent. Needless as it may appear to some readers, one cannot too often reiterate and emphasize, for the sake of others, that *music is not a translation of something other than itself,* and that *music cannot be translated into any other medium.* As an example illustrating the necessity for such seemingly unnecessary iteration I quote from a pamphlet recently printed for private circulation among the teachers of an English county education authority. The writer, after citing Jules Combarieu's definition of music as 'the art of thinking in sound,' without, however, either acknowledging its authorship or adding M. Combarieu's qualification '*without concepts,*' proceeds to 'evolve quite nice musical phrases to express ideas' (with musical examples) and suggests that 'perhaps we can invent a kind of phrase-book such as you get when travelling in a foreign country, but instead of "What is the French, German or Italian for such and such a question," we must say "What is the *music* for . . . .?"' etc., etc. 'So we begin to think in sound.' Such a conception of the function of music, as a mere alternative or substitute for speech or gesture, is puerile, and we may safely take it as an axiom that whatever can adequately be expressed in words, colour, or in sculptural or graphic form needs no musical reduplication, nor can it ever provide the *raison d'être* of a purely musical composition.

The complete libretto of an opera, the most detailed analysis of a piece of 'programme-music,' tell us nothing whatever about the actual music. But the music itself may tell us infinitely more than the text or programme around

which it has been ostensibly written—so much more, indeed, that the value of music associated with words or with a programme may be estimated by this *something-more* alone. This *something-more* is again indefinable; but it is something abstract and universal of which the particular manifestation—word, phrase, poem, or programme—is but one of many possible types or examples. When we hear that a certain work has been inspired by, or is the expression of, some particular emotion of its creator—his love for a particular woman, his dislike of a particular class of his fellowmen, and so on—we understand, if the work is of any real significance, that these emotional incidents may have prompted the composer to express in universal terms something of which they present a particular aspect. A great work is the expression not of one particular emotion but of thousands which have interacted upon one another and woven themselves into a complex mood. But art that does not express something infinitely greater than this little personal complex is relatively unimportant—certainly not a manifestation of genius. In the majority of cases a composer could not detail incidents and emotions of daily life and trace back to them the impulse to create a particular work. But even where a clue is given, whether in some personal anecdote, or in a programme, or in a text which actually accompanies the music or is set to the music, the clue, the text, and the programme are only hints regarding the actual content of the music, even as one might affix an appropriate motto or quotation to a chapter-heading. The story of Newton and the apple is symbolically, even if not actually, true. Newton's theory of gravitation *expressed,* so to speak, not only the falling of apples, but also the movements of other bodies. It applied *no less* to apples than to other bodies; but had the discovery been one that related to apples alone, its importance would have been trifling. Thus the particular incident, emotion, mood, poem, or pro-

gramme which provides the initial impulse for the creation of a musical work is expressed, but at the same time so expanded that its individual importance is dwarfed by the ulterior significance of the finished work as a whole.

We cannot, then, reach the heart of music through the text or programme with which it is associated. We may set the imagination to spin stories and to paint word-pictures of what the music has suggested to us once we have heard it; but even that fascinating game does not bring anyone who has not heard it very much nearer to the music itself, for music is not only an untranslatable but almost an unparaphrasable language. But if we take the text or the programme as a mere starting-point, we may see in what direction it is capable of expansion, we may feel how the composer has extracted something universal from a personal or a particular subject; and we may derive æsthetic satisfaction from observing how minute particulars are revealed, individually expressed but contained inevitably in the synthesis of the whole work. A superficial examination of some of the madrigalists, both Italian and English, of the late sixteenth century might lead one to suppose that they were unduly preoccupied with pictorialism and word-painting and that they paid greater attention to the verbal details of their poem than to its meaning and spirit. But on closer inspection we find many poems which, although possessing considerable charm and felicity of expression, have no very profound meaning: and yet the music to which they are allied seems charged with an intensity and depth of meaning that almost overwhelms them. This is more noticeable in the Italian than in the English madrigals; but it is evident that words such as 'death,' 'pain,' 'care,' and many others were often treated by the composers in their full connotation, regardless of their particular context. A poem of formal and stereotyped character, concerned with nothing more tragic than the impending demise of a rejected lover,

would serve as a framework over which a composer would weave a musical tapestry embodying his whole conception of mortality. And it is in this light that we must regard the texts of the operas and the choral works, in their relation to the music which Delius has associated with them.

When *A Village Romeo and Juliet* was produced in London in 1910, it was stigmatized by the reporters as 'undramatic.' But the word was hasty and ill-chosen. What was meant was that the work was lacking in the *melodramatic* element which had characterized the favourite operas of the nineteenth century. The same criticism might be applied to *Tristan and Isolde*. When it was revived in 1920 London's musical newspaper-men collectively decided that Delius' opera was not an opera at all. This brilliant discovery is almost as enlightening as the old proposition to the effect that Homer's works were not written by Homer at all but by some one else of the same name. It is recorded that when César Franck's symphony was produced, the fact that an english horn figured in the score was sufficient proof for one critic that the symphony *could not be a symphony at all*; the dear fellow was quite unaware that more than a century earlier Haydn had composed an indubitable symphony in which two of these disgraceful instruments were shamelessly employed throughout. It would seem that it is asking too much of the average English critic to expect that he shall be able to discover what a composer has aimed at in his work before deciding whether he has achieved his aim or not. He has grown so accustomed to regard an opera as a mere play set to music that his sense of what is fit and proper to the form is very sadly perturbed when he is confronted with a work which is simply the overflowing of music on to the stage, the projection of emotions underlying music into visible as well as audible reality. For Delius, as for Mozart, Weber, Wagner, and every other great operatic composer, opera is as much *a musical form* as the

sonata or the symphony. In all music, in the classical symphony as much as in the modern symphonic poem, there is an underlying programme; the programme may be concerned with the abstract interplay of thought and emotion, or it may be derived from definite facts and occurrences in the external world—or rather with the emotions aroused by them—but in either case it is a programme. The difference between a concert and an operatic performance lies solely in this fact, that in the one case the programme of the music we hear is revealed to our ears and imagination alone, while in the other a particular and visible exemplification of it is put before our eyes to assist the workings of our imagination—but the imagination, the *active* faculty of reception, must be no less alert in the latter case than in the former. Music expresses in general terms what may be exemplified by particular instances, in words or actions: the music is, so to speak, a summary statement of a general proposition, the explanatory examples are like similes or metaphors which may refer to simple and commonplace episodes of everyday life, or may equally be the creations of a soaring imagination.

I have said that the underlying programme may be of two kinds—roughly speaking, psychological on the one hand, factual on the other; but these two kinds are themselves necessarily interrelated. The psychological programme can usually be exemplified by facts: and the programme of externals can be no more than the shadowing-forth of inner relations, for these exterior happenings can only assume a musical importance in so far as they symbolize or evoke their corresponding states of mind. Musical creations are, indeed, magical formulæ for evoking particular states of mind in which the universal may be apprehended from particular angles—or a complexity of such states of mind in a particular and ordered relation. These relations which can be generalized and so encompassed and expressed by music

could not be even postulated in words without the aid of an impossible kind of psychological algebra. We cannot state an emotional crisis in words, but we can sometimes provide an example of how a particular individual will behave under the stress of such emotion, his words and actions expressing *particularly* a condition which music must necessarily *generalize,* however strong the individuality of its composer may be. Thus in an opera the plot or story is just an example, a visible particularization of what the music is telling us in broader and more universal terms. When a composer is said to be inspired by his subject, it is too often taken for granted that the subject itself suggested the work to him in the first instance, that he is adumbrating his subject as though it were a thing exterior to himself. So the music of an opera is supposed to have been generated by its text. In some cases this may be true; but in others, the majority, the subject or programme of a musical composition is no more than a convenient framework upon which the composer may construct a work whose emotional or psychic basis was already clearly defined in his mind before he lit upon his subject. This explains the common phenomenon of the composer who wants to write an opera but spends years—fruitlessly as a rule—looking for a suitable libretto. Sometimes he is driven in desperation to making it himself, and if he is not, as Wagner was, gifted with literary as well as musical ability the unaccustomed medium proves too much for him and the result is a failure which may result in the waste of much good music—as in the case of Delius' two earliest operas *Irmelin* and *The Magic Fountain.* For although opera is primarily a musical form, the libretto is by no means a negligible factor in its composition. But it is not the dominant factor. It is subservient to the music, but there must be no artistic disparity between text and music. The music should be not an illustration of its text but a new presentation, in terms of another

art, as well as an intensification of the elements of which the text was made; and the text is one of many other possible illustrations of the emotional basis of the music which has its origin in the experience or in the imagination of the composer. And, as appreciation is the inversion and necessary correlative of creative activity, the sympathetic listener will recognize its truth in reference to his own experience or imagination. Each character in the drama is a medium into which the composer projects a part of himself, providing common ground whereon he may meet the corresponding projections of each member of his audience.

All opera of this kind is either parable or pure symbolism. But we cannot always have pure parable—a plain straightforward story or ' plot ' and a complicated, exactly parallel inner story running alongside of it, with an ulterior moral or emotional significance. And the personification method of the mediæval drama would somehow be unconvincing at the present day. We can sympathize with the protagonists in the crudest drama of love and jealousy and hatred when it is performed by real *dramatis personæ,* even on the cinematograph, whereas if the matter were so far abstracted as to be played by mere personifications of the passions involved—as in the Moralities of the Middle Ages—we should be left cold and unmoved. To effect a nice balance between these two extremes is the problem that confronts the operatic composer and his librettist—those, that is to say, who realize that an opera must be something more than the addition of appropriate music to a self-subsistent play. The chief difficulty inherent in the problem is the necessity of avoiding *particular* detail which might tend to obscure or hinder the general development of the work, and yet at the same time to make the particular exemplification of the music shown on the stage a coherent and compact image of the initial conception. Delius has by no means finally solved the problem either in *A Village Romeo and Juliet* or in his

later opera, *Fennimore and Gerda,* but these works, together with Béla Bartók's *Bluebeard*, are practically the only examples contemporary music can show of the problem having been tackled with any great measure of success. The relation between the music and the drama in this kind of opera is in many respects similar to the relation between the respective contributions of the poet and traditional legend in the Greek drama. The Greeks took the plot of a play for granted; the story, in its bare outline, was always known beforehand, so that it was not necessary for the dramatist to expound it in every detail; a play was judged solely on the strength of the poet's treatment of a familiar subject. The parallel with modern opera is further shown by reference to the choruses in the Greek drama which almost invariably universalized the thought or emotion which has been expressed in a particular embodiment in the preceding scene; and one of the greatest effects in Greek drama is that species of irony which depends for its proper appreciation upon the fact that the audience as well as one of the characters on the stage is in possession of knowledge which is supposed to be as yet concealed from the other protagonist in the dialogue. Clearly, then, if the audience were not already acquainted with the plot of the whole play, many scenes would have been almost unintelligible. So it is with opera. The drama or action can only sketch out in rough outline the general drift of the work by a particular example: the intimate and subtle detail, which, paradoxical as it may seem, is the means by which the particular example is made universal, must be left for the music to fill in.

The story of *A Village Romeo and Juliet,* which is taken from a tale in Gottfried Keller's *Folk of Seldwyla,* is very simple. Manz and Marti are two farmers whose lands are separated only by a narrow strip of ground which has been let run wild since the death of its former owner. The right-

ful heir is the latter's bastard son, known as the Dark Fiddler, but he has turned vagabond and cannot or will not claim his estate. This strip of wild land has been the playground of Manz's son Sali and Marti's daughter Vrenchen from their earliest years. Little by little each of the two farmers surreptitiously encroaches upon the untilled field, until one day there is a violent quarrel over it and each goes his way in anger taking his child with him. Years pass: the anger of the two farmers persists, resulting in a long-drawn-out action at law which so far from benefiting either reduces both of them to the verge of beggary. But the enforced separation and loneliness have unconsciously ripened the early friendship of the children into love, and they meet in secret on the wild land which seems to stand in their lives for glamour and romance, a blessed retreat from the dreary world of commonplace existence; there the wind whispers thrilling secrets, and the mysterious music of the Dark Fiddler who comes and goes like the wind, no one knows whence or whither, is like an invitation into a future bright with golden expectations. But there comes a day when Marti spies them out, and in a great rage tries to tear his daughter from her lover's arms. Sali promptly fells him to the ground and when we next hear of him he has become a permanent inmate of the lunatic asylum.

Vrenchen is now left quite alone and destitute. Sali comes to her on the last night she may spend in her old home; they fall asleep together by the dying embers of the fire and both dream that they are being married in the old church of Seldwyla. But reality breaks in upon their dream with the light of dawn. Sali tries to show a bold face and cheerfully declares that their dream shall all come true, but Vrenchen is less hopeful and pathetically cries out for one long, happy, care-free day with her lover. So they go out into the world together, penniless and friendless. They come to a great fair—effective microcosm of the world—but their

hopes of an innocent day's enjoyment are soon frustrated by the malicious tongues of local busybodies, which begin to wag furiously when they are observed together. And so they wander ruefully away towards another place the still-hopeful Sali knows of: and this is called the Garden of Paradise. It is really a tumble-down old inn by a river at the foot of the mountains. Here, Sali feels sure, they will be quite unknown and there will be no country gossip to make hurtful remarks about them. But there is no peace for them here. While they are even on their way to the Garden of Paradise, the Dark Fiddler is already sitting there with his disreputable associates, relating to them, without malice but with a certain amount of sardonic humour, the peculiar story of Manz and Marti and their children. The lovers have no sooner reached the garden then they are recognized and greeted by the Dark Fiddler with a kindly invitation that they should join him and his company in their vagabond life in the mountains. We are wanderers, they say—the Fiddler and the Slim girl, the Wild girl, the poor horn-player and the hump-backed bass-viol player—vagabonds: we own nothing, live nowhere, roaming always from place to place, free, merry, and careless, with a song ever on our lips, *journeying onwards towards the setting sun.*

The proposal sounds attractive. Are we not also vagabonds and outcasts, say the lovers, and wandering through the world? Life with these people might be kinder than it was with those we knew—and so long as we are together, what matter where we go? 'Ay,' says the Slim girl, leering at Sali, 'and when you tire of each other, there will be others waiting for you.' The vagabonds are making a night of it and the drink is flowing freely. They are inclined to laugh at the luckless lovers for being so innocent and unwordly-wise, but they are none the less ready to welcome them among themselves if they care to take to the mountains and the open roads. But Sali and Vrenchen know

instinctively that such a life can never be for them. Some intuition tells them that the clamorous and drunken vagabonds, well-intentioned though they may be within their limitations, would break in upon their innocence and their illusions and rob them of their dearest dreams. These children, unwitting in their wisdom, have come into the world with foreknowledge of evil, forewarned against the forces that accomplish the soul's corruption and disintegration. Death were a thousand times to be preferred to the tarnishing of the faith that is in them, to the slow fading of that dream which had been their best ideal, their great illusion.

They seal their compact with a kiss and even as they do so, the rising moon floods the garden with its soft, mellow light, and all things around them seem of a sudden transformed and charged with a strange, unearthly beauty. Out of the mist, from the far distance, there floats along the river the voice of a boatman: 'Heigho, wind, sing long, sing low. Travellers we a-passing by!' But it seems like a voice from Eternity calling mournfully across the sands of Time, the voice of a sentinel on the frontiers of life and death, who, Janus-like, surveys the dominions of Time and the timeless country beyond the grave. 'Shall we too,' says Sali, 'drift down the river?' And Vrenchen, adds in echo of his thoughts, 'and drift away for ever.'

The lovers are on the brink of an ecstasy which life has no more power to annihilate. 'See,' they cry, 'the moonbeams kiss the woods, the fields, and all their flowers: and the river softly singing seems to beckon us. And listen! far-off sounds of music startle trembling echoes that rise and fall again and die where the sunset's glow yet lingers. Ah, where the echoes dare to wander, shall we two not dare to go?' At this point ribald laughter and a wild sound of fiddling bursts from the inn where the vagabonds are now considerably more than half-seas-over. The clash of esctasies is

admirable: we see the world of the lovers and the world of the vagabonds and the gulf that is fixed between them. There is a barge filled with hay moored to the river-bank. 'Look, our marriage-bed await us,' cries Sali, and when they have drifted a little way down the river he pulls the plug from the bottom of the boat and casts it into the river. From the far distance the voice of the boatman comes fainter and fainter: 'Heigho, travellers we a-passing by!'

The work is described on the title page as a 'lyrical drama in six pictures.' It is virtually in three acts with a prologue; the second and third pictures are merged musically into one, while between the fifth and sixth occurs the miraculously lovely orchestral interlude which is in itself an epitome of the whole drama. In the prologue Sali and Vrenchen are yet children, so that their parts—both soprani—have to be taken by different singers from those who play them in the succeeding scenes. The prologue shows the two farmers ploughing their respective fields on a fine spring morning, the children playing in the wild land, and the Dark Fiddler appearing like a visitant from the Unknown, bringing Beauty and Sorrow ever together in his company. The Fiddler is a compassionate rather than a sinister figure, as some have imagined him. He seems to be throughout a rather shadowy figure of fatality; a bastard denuded alike of his spiritual as of his material birthright, he is immune from sorrow and incapable of simple joy. He stands a little aloof from life, appearing mysteriously from his wild land which is a half-forgotten, half-desolate fairy-land whose very weeds have beauty. The prologue ends with the farmers' quarrel. The second picture shows us Marti's house six years later, in a sorry state of neglect. It is here that the young lovers meet again: and the third picture takes us back to the wild land where they hold their secret trysts. The fourth picture shows Vrenchen alone by her ruined hearth, and in a transformation we see the dream-wedding.

In the fifth picture we have the fair and in the last the Garden of Paradise. Each scene is a glimpse taken directly from the continuity of the unhappy lovers' existence. There is no quickening the action for melodramatic purposes, no rearrangement of circumstances for the sake of a situation. It is but natural that the figures in the play seem unsubstantial and the action dream-like. The whole work is charged with an atmosphere of mystery: through it all there blows a wind as from a far country. There was a wonderful moment in the 1920 production when the curtain rose on the last scene, after that almost unbearably tragic *entr'acte,* and revealed the gaunt figure of the Dark Fiddler, outcast of mankind and brother of the winds of heaven, with arms outstretched towards the distant mountains. The sense of *spiritual exile* conveyed by this one gesture, which paralleled to perfection the strange and haunting music of distant horns which it accompanied, was extraordinarily moving; and in a really sensitive production the work would be full of such moments of intensity. The keynote of the work lies in those words of the boatman: 'Heigho, travellers we a-passing by.' What lies beyond is shrouded in mystery, but there is no staying the journey onwards, ever onwards towards the setting sun. And this theme runs like an undercurrent all through the works of Delius.

To praise the music of this opera and cavil at the drama, as so many critics have done, is simply to expose the fact that the meaning of the music itself has not been grasped; for the drama is literally but the overflowing of the music from the region of the audible into that of the visible. If opera be defined as perfect co-relation between music and action, then *A Village Romeo and Juliet* is one of the most flawless masterpieces that have ever been given to the world. There is never any disparity between the music and the action; if the drama of the work is 'undramatic' (according to the Italian-opera scale of values), then the music is

too. But this is an unessential adjective.[1] What really matters is that the work is vitally expressive and that it illuminates things which matter in the lives of us all: and if this is not covered by the word *dramatic,* so much the worse for the word. *A Village Romeo and Juliet* has all the poignant beauty of a fairy-story cut short by disillusion and robbed of its happy ending. It is an elegy on the pitiful fate of trusting innocence at the hands of relentless chance. But even chance—which is to some extent symbolized throughout by the Dark Fiddler—is subject to a higher law and fulfils its purpose in the world in obedience not to the malicious caprice of its own tyrannical will, but to a compelling necessity. The executioner may pity his victim and doubt the justice of his sentence, but he is powerless to save him. The specific reasons *why* Manz and Marti quarrel and *why* in the end the lovers find life impossible together and intolerable apart would be unimportant even if they were not obvious. The inevitable facts remain, and the triviality or apparent unreason of the causes of a tragedy only intensify the pathos of the situation when it has actually arisen. You

[1] Mr. W. J. Turner has written very sensibly on this point in connection with the work (*Music and Life*). He says: 'The lovers are strangely passive. They pass through the scenes of the opera like the children of a dream. It is the love of mediæval times rather than love as operatic composers know it—that love which, like a malady of the flesh, took hold of the patient so that he forgot all the duties of this life and went his way with eyes that saw nothing of the world around him. How ridiculous it is to complain that this story is not dramatic! One might as well complain of Burgundy for not sparkling! The fact is, our operatic public has got so used to fat tenors brandishing cardboard swords, and to daggers, poison, and revolvers, and to abductions, seductions, and desertions, that they do not know what to make of such a strange, inert, flowerless passion as that of Sali and Vrenchen.'

But if one may judge by the enthusiastic appreciation displayed by the three very large audiences that heard the work at Covent Garden in 1920, the public knew far better than the professional critics what to make of it. And it should be remembered that opera is dealt with in our newspapers by the so-called musical, not by the dramatic, critics. Mr. Turner is an exception to the rule, a dramatic as well as a musical critic—and a poet into the bargain.

and I might have been quite content to go and get drunk with the Wild girl and the Slim girl and the hump-backed bass-viol player, but Sali and Vrenchen thirsted for the Infinite: and we should not forget that many of the specific causes for which the martyrs and heroes of history have willingly laid down their lives will always appear incomprehensibly trivial to people of other times, other manners, and other temperaments. The tragedy of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* is the tragedy of unreasonable children crying for an impossible moon that they would not suffer reason to eclipse. Who shall say that they sold their lives too cheaply? Who indeed can deny them their victory?

Such a work, naturally, presents extraordinary difficulties to the producer. I have already quoted Delius' dictum that the singers must act from the music and not from the stage, and it is clear that action in opera—whether modern or ancient—should differ as essentially from action in drama as speech differs from song, that it should be suggestive and symbolic rather than realistic and representative. *Intimacy* is a further essential in the staging of a work of this kind, but economic conditions and the necessity of accommodating a large orchestra generally make its realization in a small and intimate theatre impossible. The orchestral problem has already led one or two composers to turn their thoughts to a form of 'chamber opera,' which in the matter of resources needed for its production should bear the same relation to the so-called 'grand' opera, as the orchestral symphony bears to the string quartet. This form of opera would impose severe limitations upon the composer, but the prospect of engaging and accommodating (to say nothing of paying) an orchestra of a hundred performers for the production of an opera with a cast of *one,* like Schönberg's *Erwartung,* is even more formidable in these days. It is possible that the orchestra in the opera-house may one day be supplanted by the gramophone, but before

this can happen the existing machine will have to be improved beyond all recognition. Apart from this one great difficulty, what we may call the chamber-ideal in the production of opera is admirable. 'Grand' opera and the conditions attendant upon its production are incompatible with any high degree of psychological subtlety. Moreover, the complex and multifarious nature of the paraphernalia required for grand spectacular productions involves a decentralization of control which is fatal to the unity of the performance. Chamber opera demands only a small curtained stage on which variety and subtlety of lighting will for the most part take the place of realistic scenery, and external artifice will only be employed for the purpose of lighting up that interior theatre of the soul wherein the real drama is enacted for each individual spectator. The whole production should be controlled by one man—preferably the composer himself—who must be versed in the symbology not of music alone but of gesture and light and colour also. Every movement and expression of the players, every gradation of light as well as every note of the music, must be under his direct control: for thus and only thus shall we obtain a whole and unitary work of art in that form which has hitherto given us little but confused tautologies.

In *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, although there is an ostensible story, it is impossible to regard the characters as the mere individuals of Gottfried Keller's novel. They have been transformed into symbolical types which move and have their being in a vision of human life aloof and mysterious. In *Fennimore and Gerda* (composed eight years later than *A Village Romeo and Juliet*) the characters are not in the least mysterious. The libretto is derived from Jens Peter Jacobsen's *Niels Lyhne*,[1] a novel of compara-

[1] For some reason or other the only English translation of the book is called *Siren Voices*.

tively modern life, and in many passages Jacobsen's actual dialogue has been retained *verbatim* in the translation set to music. Yet the form of the work has been wholly prescribed by musical considerations and the libretto is everywhere subordinate to the requirements of the music. It is described as ' two episodes in the life of Niels Lyhne.' Like *A Village Romeo and Juliet* it is divided into ' pictures ' instead of acts and scenes, but these are briefer and more concise than those of the earlier opera, and the whole work is slighter and more concentrated in form than its predecessor. Every ' picture ' is musically self-subsistent and self-contained, generally built about an initial theme or rhythmic figure. The logical development and flow of the music are never interrupted for the sake of thrusting words into prominence and the commonplaces of ordinary conversation are not underlined by any musical commentary, but each picture is dominated by a mood. The whole work plays but an hour and a half. After the second picture and after the ninth picture pauses are designed to mark the lapse of an interval of time in the action; and after the fourth picture there is a full close but no pause. Except for these breaks the music is continuous, the pictures being connected by orchestral interludes which are so short as, happily, to preclude the possibility of an elaborately realistic mounting of the opera. The longest picture—which is the last—occupies but fourteen pages of the vocal score, and the shortest four, there being eighty-one pages in all.

Without any prelude the curtain rises upon a room in the house of Consul Claudi—the action takes place in Denmark. Fennimore, his daughter, is working at her embroidery while her cousin, Niels Lyhne, sits at her feet. They are talking over their childhood. Fennimore is impatient at the monotony of her home life and longs to go out into the world in quest of new experiences. Niels, on the other hand, is a dreamer who is well content where he is. ' I want no

wider world than this,' he exclaims. 'Out in the world one feels a longing for home—and perhaps one's true home is a kindred spirit whom one loves.' He is on the point of declaring his love to his cousin when they are interrupted by the appearance of Erik Refstrup, Niels' best friend, in whom Fennimore is obviously more interested than in the dreamy Niels. It begins to rain. Erik calls for a song and Fennimore unlocks her heart with a romantic ballad:

> Young Svanhild sat alone and sighed
> Of freedom and joy despairing.
> 'Over yonder's the land of my dreams,' she said
> 'And it's thither I would be faring' . . .

The curtain descends and, after an *entr'acte* of twenty-nine bars, rises to reveal the lower end of the Claudi's garden, which stretches down to the edge of the fjord. There is a little landing-stage overshadowed by trees, and here Erik and Fennimore are discovered together in a boat. It is late evening, and the sound of singing is heard from over the water—a long-sustained melody without words for a tenor voice behind the scene. Hearing the approach of a second boat, Erik and Fennimore disappear into the garden. The other boat arrives rowed by Niels and containing Consul Claudi, his wife, and a friend. They disembark and make for the house, while Niels remains behind to moor the boat. But Erik and Fennimore reappear and Niels quickly conceals himself in the shadow of the trees. A swift love-scene ensues (twenty-eight bars in all) and Niels is left alone in despair.

Three years pass. Erik and Fennimore, now married, are living in a house on the Mariagerfjord. Disappointment has come to both of them. Fennimore is disillusioned about her husband, who has taken to drink, Erik about his talent as a painter. He stares moodily at the sea. Fennimore reproaches him for not working any longer at his art. He replies that he needs new impression, new influences, to

stimulate him. Niels Lyhne has been invited for a visit and presently arrives. While Erik is helping the porter to carry in his luggage, Fennimore implores Niels to do all he can to pull Erik out of the slough of despond into which he has fallen. 'Day after day he broods his time away, and when the day is done his dreadful friends take him off and keep him drinking all night long.' Erik returns, followed by a maid bearing bottles and glasses. Fennimore leaves the two men to themselves and there is some semblance of joviality as they light their cigars and drink each other's health. The curtain falls, and there is an *entr'acte* of four bars. The next picture shows the same scene, but late in the evening. The two friends have been talking over old times. Erik speaks of the gradual falling away of all his bright hopes and illusions. 'At times a sense of despair comes over me. I sit and work and nothing comes of it—and time is gliding by with relentless haste, Oh, with relentless haste! Whenever I paint a picture I feel that the time it has taken me is mine for ever although it's past and gone. But think of all the years I've lived and created nothing!' Niels advises him to travel, but this seems only to increase his anxiety. He regards travel as a last resource on which he is afraid to embark for fear of finding that that, too, is useless, and so proving to himself once and for all that his career as an artist is at an end. This is the most powerful and subtly wrought scene in the whole work.

The next picture shows Erik seated at his easel, morose and listless, unable to achieve anything. Five of his boon companions, on their way to the fair at Aalborg, invite him to join them. At first he declines. Then one of them—a broken-down schoolmaster—taunts him: 'I see you are much too busy with your immortal paintings.' Wearily he consents to go with them. Fennimore begs him to stay at home, but it is useless. 'I must have company.' 'But you have Niels: a better friend you'll never find.' 'Niels! He

no longer understands me.' Fennimore watches him go, then bursts into tears. Niels comes in and she composes herself. She asks him what Erik was like as a boy, and he speaks of his friend with loyalty and enthusiasm: 'He was all that a boy should be: brave and handsome, a lad of impulse, alert and active, always given to wild pranks and madcap adventures.' 'How strange then,' says Fennimore, 'that he should have wanted to become an artist!' Niels bids her think of him as he was when she first fell in love with him. She replies that she has too often brooded over that time. With a sudden impulse she stretches out her hands to Niels and begs him to stand by her in her trouble. 'You'll be my friend, Niels, always . . . .?'

The curtain is lowered for a few bars, and the next picture shows us the same room in the cold grey twilight of morning. Fennimore has been waiting for the return of Erik, who presently staggers in, completely drunk, and collapses on a sofa. A brief interlude (very much akin to the slow middle section of *Brigg Fair*) ushers in the seventh picture: the birch forest in autumn. In this scene the passion that has been smouldering between Niels and Fennimore, despite their vain struggles to suppress it, bursts into flame. It is a scene of swift movement and a despairing sort of intensity, with a sinister sense of autumn for a background, to remind the lovers of the years that are gone and of the brevity and uncertainty of their stolen hours of happiness.

The two concluding pictures of the Fennimore episode take place in the depth of winter. The fjord is frozen and the ground is covered with snow. Niels is now living on the other side of the fjord. Erik has gone to Aalborg for the day with his friends, and Fennimore is impatiently awaiting a promised visit from Niels. There is a feeling of tense, almost hysterical expectancy in the air. Suddenly the maid brings in a telegram. Erik is dead. He has met with an accident

and they are bringing him home. Fennimore, in a frenzy of remorse, rushes out to meet Niels, curses him for having betrayed his friend and her, and bids him be gone for ever. Four dark figures approach, bearing the body of Erik, and Fennimore falls insensible to the ground . . . Three years elapse. We see Niels on his farm at Lonborggard in harvest-time. The labourers are singing in the fields. Niels, resigned and middle-aged, reflects upon the past and consoles himself in his present devotion to the 'old All-Mother of us all,' an idyllic and tranquil scene. The last picture gives us the second 'episode' in his life—his courtship of Gerda, a sentimental little girl not yet out of her teens, with whom, we are led to believe, he settled down on his farm and lived happily ever after. The addition of this second episode is a mistake from several points of view. It is artistically wrong in that it does not bear any essential relation to what has preceded it, in the sense of having evolved naturally from the rest of the drama. It is like a happy ending arbitrarily tacked on to a very finished tragedy.

Jacobsen's novel does not by any means end happily. The short respite in Niels' melancholy existence pictured in the second episode is abruptly terminated by the death of Gerda and the book concludes with a particularly horrible desription of the death of Niels himself in a military hospital after he has been wounded in action. There is, of course, no reason why Delius—who is only selecting from Jacobsen such passages as suit his musical purpose—should follow him to the bitter end, any more than that he should begin at the beginning of the novel and trace Niels' career from childhood onwards. It is the disproportion and psychological falsity of the last section that jar. It is like a sugar-plum designed to take away the taste of the preceding tragedy, and one resents this, for the tragedy is convincingly complete in itself, and though it deals with but one episode, epitomizes the whole life of Niels Lyhne as

Jacobsen conceived it. There is also a purely practical reason for the omission of the last two pictures. The Gerda episode occupies but one-fifth of the whole work; but that fifth is just long enough to make a programme containing *Fennimore and Gerda* as well as another opera too long, while *Fennimore and Gerda* alone does not constitute what the Germans call an *abendfüllendes Werk*. This fact alone has undoubtedly hindered the performance of the work at several German opera-houses which would otherwise have been glad to take it into their repertory.

It must not be supposed from the somewhat detailed exposition given above of the scope of opera as exemplified in the works of Delius that Delius started his musical career with a theory and set out to write a series of works in which it might be embodied. Far from it. The processes by which he has attained the remarkable skill which has enabled him to achieve in *A Village Romeo and Juliet* a very perfect form of symbolical music-drama and in *Fennimore and Gerda* a very beautiful example of realistic opera as distinct from a realistic play set to music, must be sought for in his musical development alone. In addition to the two works that have been discussed, there are four others of which the libretti are very far from fulfilling the conditions he would at present demand. The earliest, *Irmelin,* is a fairy-tale of quite ordinary kind, and its form is dramatically rather below the level of the conventional operatic text. Though the music was much praised by Grieg and Messager at the time of its composition, its performance was never seriously contemplated by the composer. *The Magic Fountain* and *Koanga* which followed it are musically on a far higher level, though their texts and construction are decidedly ' operatrical.'

Margot-la-Rouge, a one-act opera written for a competition, is sheer medodrama. There is hardly a trace of the familiar Delius from beginning to end and it seems as if he had

deliberately 'written down' to the well-known competition level in this opera. The story deals with a French soldier's discovery of his long-lost sweetheart plying for hire in a disreputable Paris café. Knives are drawn and the curtain descends upon a pile of corpses. It is all as 'dramatic' as you please—and quite pointless. None of these works has been published and, of the four, only *Koanga* has been performed. This work and *The Magic Fountain*—early products of Delius' Florida impressions—contain many characteristic pages which, viewed in the light of the later works, look like sketches for certain passages in *Appalachia, Sea-Drift,* and *A Mass of Life.* Had they been published at the time when they were written, they would have appeared sufficiently remarkable and original; and even now *Koanga* and *The Magic Fountain* might well be revived with a very fair measure of success, though it is doubtful whether they would add anything to the reputation of the composer of *A Village Romeo and Juliet.* This consummate masterpiece, with which none of the earlier operas can be compared, is still too little known—it has not had more than six or seven performances in all—and its frequent repetition would serve a better purpose than the production of any of the other operas.[1]

[1] During the last few years Delius has talked of *Wuthering Heights* and *Deirdre of the Sorrows* as subjects which appealed to him for musical treatment, but so far nothing has come of either project. The task of arranging a series of 'pictures' from Emily's Brontë's great novel in the form of a libretto would seem to be almost impossible. *Deirdre* is a more obvious theme, by which several composers—notably Fritz Hart—have already been attracted.

III

HIS CHORAL AND ORCHESTRAL WORKS

IT is but natural, when we turn from the ostensibly dramatic works of Delius to his choral and orchestral compositions which are based upon or allied with a poetic text, that we should find far less divergence of style between his activities in the two forms than we are accustomed to meet with in other composers. Such differences as are apparent are conditioned entirely by the exigencies of theatrical representation; in both kinds the form and structure of the music are equally plastic, always determined by musical rather than by textual considerations. *Sea-Drift* is essentially a dramatic work, but there is no such definite cast as even the most elastic form of opera would demand. The sea-setting is suggested at the outset by the orchestra, and, in colours which change and vary with the changing emotions of the poem as the lights must vary in the theatre, is continually brought before the mind throughout the work.

Whitman's poem tells in simple and poignant words the story of two birds, who built their nest in a lonely place by the seashore, and of a boy who watched them at mating time, 'every day, cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.' Until one day the she-bird disappeared and was seen no more. 'And thenceforward all summer in the sound of the sea, and at night under the full of the moon . . . I saw, I heard at intervals the remaining one, the solitary

guest from Alabama.' Sometimes the boy narrates, at others the chorus takes up his reading of the story—for the tragedy is enacted in the soul of the lonely boy—and personifies the he-bird calling upon the winds and the stars in accents alternating between elation and despair to bring back the loved one he has lost. It is impossible without quoting the whole poem to give an adequate impression of the wide range of its emotion, and of the way in which the passion of the words and music rises and falls with a perfection of poise and cadence that seems to echo the very sound of the sea itself, uniting the story and its setting in a single vision that grips the imagination with an almost uncanny tenacity. In this music we seem to hear the very quintessence of all the sorrow and unrest that man can feel because of love. It is the veritable drama of love and death, an image of the mystery of separation. The soul, distracted by doubt, rises in impassioned protest against the unheeding stars; but confronted at every turn by darkness and silence, it sinks down into a sort of numbness of endurance, and, when all that it has loved and hoped for seems to have fallen away, it rises again to re-create the past, to clothe it in a vesture of imperishable reality. The unity and formal perfection of this work embody the realization that all was fore-ordained, the future implicit in the past. Fate is accepted from the beginning: only for a moment does rebellion stir; and in the tragic annihilation of all that life has seemed to offer is found in the end a deeper truth and a more lasting beauty.

Sea-Drift is a lyrical utterance: *A Mass of Life* is a work of epic grandeur. It would last perhaps an hour and a half in performance, exclusive of intervals. But, although it is made up of eleven separate movements, it is no less all-of-a-piece than *Sea-Drift,* which plays without a break from beginning to end, so carefully are the different sections proportioned and balanced one against another, and so

magnificently is the final climax approached. After what has already been said of the relation between music and its text, one need not emphasize the fact that this work is not an 'attempt to set philosophy to music,' as it has been foolishly described. It is Nietzsche, the poet—an incomparably greater man than Nietzsche, the philosopher—who has been drawn upon for the text; one might almost say Nietzsche, the musician, for when his creative imagination soars highest his very words 'aspire towards the condition of music,' seeking to express a wider significance than words alone can ever convey. Nietzsche, the philosopher, is often at variance with himself as well as with the world, but Nietzsche, the poet-musician, is at one with the great mystics of all the ages. And Delius is, indeed, a pantheistic mystic whose vision has been attained by an all-embracing acceptation, a 'yea-saying' to life. Such a mind has become so profoundly conscious of the life of all nature that it has begun to perceive the great rhythms of life itself: so that all things seem to live and have their being in itself, filling it with a sense of such deep peace and beauty that the conditions of separate existence in the self become intolerable to it. *A Mass of Life,* from its first triumphant choral invocation of the will of man to the stupendous closing hymn to Eternity wherein the heart would break for very excess of joy, is an epic of initiation, of the bringing to birth of God in man. The message of Zarathustra is the same as the message of Hermes Trismegistos and of Blake:

> Thou art a man—God is no more;
> Thine own humanity learn to adore.

And—'Jesus Christ is the only God, and so are you and so am I.' It is the great 'yea-saying' to life, the realization that change and death are only apparent, that joy is in the end deeper than sorrow, though weeping may endure for the night of time, and that all seeming discords are but the

components of a greater harmony. In a series of symbolical pictures there is laid before us Man's progress from time to eternity. Here Delius has essayed the most tremendous subject that can provide poet or musician with a theme, for it is an epitome of all subjects. He has succeeded triumphantly in his task, and has produced a work which in its grandeur and breadth of vision and overwhelming beauty is the equal of the most monumental achievements of the great masters of music.

The double chorus bursts in at the second bar of the work with a magisterial invocation: 'Oh thou my will, thou that canst shatter my misfortune, preserve me from all trivial victories! Oh thou predestined guardian of my soul, whom I call Fate! Thou who art in me and above me! Preserve me for one great and final triumph; that at the great noontide I may be ready to answer the call of myself and of my most secret will' (*Zarathustra* LVI. 30). Then Zarathustra speaks: 'Lift up your hearts, my brothers! And lift up your legs as well, and dance: or better still stand right up on your heads! This rosy crown of laughter which I have set upon my head, I throw to you, my brothers. Laughter I pronounce holy. Ye higher mortals, learn of me—to laugh' (*Zarathustra* LXXIII. 17-20). There follows the song of Man the lover in pursuit of Life his beloved (*Zarathustra* LIX. 1). The movement, beginning quietly with a duet for the soprano and tenor soli, gradually becomes more animated until the chorus enters with an exciting double-fugue—the first 'dance-song.' The tumult dies away, the dance-song is heard but faintly from a distance, and Life, in another aspect, turns to Zarathustra and addresses him: 'Oh Zarathustra, far away from good and evil we found our island and our green meadows—we two alone! So needs it must be that we love one another. Oh Zarathustra, thou art not faithful enough to me. There is an old deep bell tolling. Hark to

this bell tolling at midnight and meditate upon its tolling. Oh Zarathustra, I know that thou wilt soon be leaving me.' And softly in the background the male chorus enters with the words that accompany the tolling of the midnight bell which sounds from the orchestra: 'Oh Man, give ear! What saith deep Midnight? I was asleep and from the depths of my dreams I awoke. The world is deep, yea deeper far than day believed. Deep is its woe: but joy is deeper yet than grief of heart. Woe saith: Be gone! But all joy craves for the Infinite, joy yearns after eternity.' Zarathustra echoes the words of the tolling bell, and the movement closes with Zarathustra and Life gazing upon each other in the green meadow in the cool of the evening, and weeping quietly together.

The transition from the breathless exhilaration of the love-chase to the contemplative mood which is its reaction is beautifully achieved in the music which dies away in twilight and tranquillity. But this deep peace is quickly broken in upon by a mood full of misgivings verging on madness: 'Woe is me: Whither is time fled? Have I not descended into deep wells? The world sleeps. Ah, the hound bays and the moon shines! Rather will I die than tell you what my heart at midnight ponders. Now am I dead already. All is over. Spider that spinn'st around me, cravest thou blood? Ah, the dew is falling and the hour approaching, that hour which asks and asks again insistently: Who hath the heart to face it? Who shall be lord of the world?' But night falls ever again, and the world's unrest is soothed with the ripple of waters through the silence of the night. ''Tis night,' says Zarathustra, 'now all the love-songs of the world awake. My soul, too, is a love-song. Something instilled that naught can ever still stirs in my heart and longs to find a voice. A longing for love is in me, and that speaketh the speech of love. Light am I: ah, would that I were darkness! This is my solitude, that

I am girt about with light. Oh solitude of the creative ones! From what lonely silences gleam out the lights of the world!' The music is wrapped round in the mantle of night, the darkness and the silence are broken only by the murmur of waters and the distant sighing of the song of love. So ends the first part of the *Mass*.

In the second part we find Zarathustra in the midst of his meditations among the mountains. After a quiet orchestral prelude the spirit of energetic activity once more asserts itself in an exulting chorus: 'Arise, now, up, thou glorious noontide! The sea rages. Onward, away, old seafarers! . . . Gone is the lingering sadness of my spring. Now am I become all summer and a summer noontide—a summer on the heights with cool springs of water and thrice-blessed stillness. Oh come, my companions, that our stillness maybe yet more blessed. For these are our heights, our homeland, and we are neighbours of the eagles, neighbours of the snow, neighbours to the very sun itself!' Then Zarathustra speaks to his lyre, his muse: 'From long ago and far away thy voice sings to me, it wells up out of the still pools of love the pain of all ages hath torn at thine heart. Thy voice is ripe as the golden autumn, akin to this lonely heart of mine; and thou sayest: The grapes wax golden and fain would die—of joy would they die. Ye higher mortals, do ye not scent a secret perfume rising up, the scent of Eternity, perfume of perfect joy golden and mellow as old wine, perfume of midnights' old ecstatic death which cries: the world is deep, yea, deeper far than day believed.'

In the next movement we have the second dance-song (*Zarathustra* XXXII. 1). Zarathustra is wandering through a forest at eventide and suddenly he comes upon a clearing where young girls are dancing together on the greensward. (The music is for four-part female choir, without words, and orchestra.) As soon as they become aware of the philo-

sopher's presence they scatter in alarm. But he reassures them and begs them not to interrupt their dancing. 'No spoil-sport am I, but intercessor 'twixt God and the Devil, who surely is naught but the spirit of heaviness. I am a forest, a night of darkling branches. Whoso fears not my darkness will find fair banks of roses beneath its cypress shade.' The dance is resumed—now wilder and more vigorous than before. But after a while the maidens weary of their pleasure and troop away into the wood. The twilight deepens and Zarathustra is left alone with his thoughts. Here as elsewhere throughout the work the voice of evening seems to breathe secrets of hidden things into his ear. His mood is one of exalted, almost ecstatic melancholy. 'The sun has long gone down. The meadows are dewy and the woods breathe coolness. The Unknown steals upon me and gazes through my eyes reflectively. What, liv'st thou still, Zarathustra? Why? For what purpose? By what means? And whither farest thou? Is it not folly to be still alive?' From the far distance, very faintly, the voices of the dancing maidens re-echo through the wood. 'Ah, my friends, it is the evening that questions me thus. Forgive me my sadness, forgive me that evening has fallen upon me.' And as the distant voices die away, the movement comes to an almost imperceptible close . . .

Zarathustra has fallen asleep beneath a tree in the meadows in the heat of noontide. The shepherds' pipes are heard in the distance—a lovely colloquy of oboe, English horn, and bass oboe against a background of strings. The world dreams in the sunshine and silence and solitude. 'Hush, disturb me not,' cries Zarathustra; 'the earth is now made perfect. Oh golden rondure of the world! Who art thou then, my soul? How little suffices for thy perfect bliss!' The chorus murmurs in a mood of deep and quiet and passionate contentment: 'Oh joy, Oh joy, Oh joy!' and the music fades into silence. But Zarathustra's heart

is still full of unearthly longing. As midnight draws near, he calls his friends about him—for midnight is the solemn hour of initiation, when the soul may take wings and soar into the higher regions which are its home. The music grows richer and more sombre. 'Come forth, come forth! The hour is ripe: let us wander forth into the night!' And softly at first, but gradually swelling to a greater volume of sound, we hear the ancient bell of midnight tolling, and the secret voices of night bidding man take heed of what the solemn tolling speaks to him. The hymn of joy that overspans the gulf of time is heard again, no longer in a distant undertone, but with the full strength of the chorus—joy that would over-reach itself in an inarticulate pæan of exultation. And the last great shout of triumph fades away into a lingering echo wherein all the voices of creation seem to utter the word: Eternity! . . .

This colossal work, without a doubt the greatest musical achievement since Wagner, a Mass worthy to rank beside the great Mass of Sebastian Bach, is as yet almost entirely unknown, even to musicians and those who profess to be in touch with the most recent developments of the art. It may be that, in this age of superficiality in art, its very profundity militates against it. But such music is proof against the neglect of the age which gave it birth. It is, in the fullest sense of the word, a deeply *religious* work, and one can imagine a more spiritually enlightened generation performing it as a solemn ritual in some gigantic open-air theatre, year after year at the coming-in of summer.

From *A Mass of Life* to the *Requiem* is indeed a far cry: it is a transition from the truly sublime to something very near the ridiculous. The text of the *Requiem* is purely negative and strikes one at first sight as being a direct denial of the spirit which all Delius' music asserts and proclaims, the living spirit which has found such noble utterance particularly in *A Mass of Life*. With as much dogmatic self-

assurance as the most bigoted Christian ever mustered to proclaim the terrors of a material Hell, the anonymous librettist denies the immortality of the soul and survival of human consciousness as though there were something immoral and offensive in the very possibility. One sees clearly enough that he has only aimed at denying the eschatology of the Christian Churches—an occupation which many people would compare to the flogging of a dead horse. But the result is a sadly unphilosophical and inconsistent medley of conflicting ideas; and like so much 'rationalist' propaganda it is largely composed of quotation from the Bible. It is the creed of the atheist as opposed to the open-mindedness of the agnostic. It may be that we have no evidence of immortality of the kind that would be acceptable to the average police-court magistrate. But the testimony of religious experience and intuition throughout the ages cannot be lightly set aside; and on the purely intellectual plane metaphysical speculation can carry us to the point where time itself is no more, and past and future have no longer any meaning.

Nature, it is admitted in the philosophastry of this *Requiem,* is eternal, but man is mortal and transitory. But is not man integrally a part of Nature—or is not Nature, perhaps, an aspect of man? And are not both Eternal in the sense of not pertaining at all to the illusory dominion of time? For time is man's creation, a glass through which, darkly enough, his senses glimpse reality. Is he, then, subject to his own creature? We think of the past as now non-existent—dead; and of the future as non-existent now—unborn. But the present, NOW Himself, who has always *just* popped round the corner before we can put salt on his tail, becomes in that case nothing more than a perpetual passing over from one state of non-existence to another: and motion in time becomes a mere illusion. And how can we attach any absolute meaning to the term futurity when

Sirius is even *now* gazing down upon our distant past? These are but a few of the speculations which the author of this *Requiem* so glibly dismisses, shouting down all argument with his 'trumpet-tongued voice of Truth' so typical of the worst type of German professor, who might well take lessons in humility from Pontius Pilate. Such facile negation only narrows the scope of the artist. How can he enlarge upon a theme that is in itself an attempt to set limits to the imagination, a blind faith—for that is what it amounts to—which is as much of a superstition and an anachronism at the present day as the testimony of our eyes that the sun moves round the earth?

It is almost unnecessary to add that the musical interest of the *Requiem* centres in those sections where the living imagination is least impeded by the cere-cloths of materialism and least reminded of the stench of the charnel-house. Yet, when all that can be said in its favour has been said, it remains the weakest of all Delius' mature works. In writing it his constructive instinct seems to have temporarily deserted him, with the result that for once his music seems to have been conditioned by the form of the text rather than the text by the music. The music lacks coherence and organic unity as well as the text. It is vacillating, uncertain—and contains more than one of Delius' very rare lapses into sheer banality. The work opens with an impressive and majestic movement for double chorus and orchestra. 'One day is like another, and all our days are rounded with a sleep. They pass and never return again.' The mood recalls the first of the *Ernste Gesänge* of Brahms: 'All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.' After considerable development of this theme, the solo voice enters with a denunciation of the 'weaklings filled with woe and fear' who 'drugged themselves with dreams and golden visions, and built themselves a house of lies to live in.' But 'then rose a storm with mighty winds

and laid it low. And out of the storm the voice of Truth resounded in trumpet tones: Man thou art mortal and needs must thou die.' The opening chorus is repeated and gradually swells into a funeral march of great breadth and nobility. But this is interrupted by 'the crowd,' represented by a divided chorus of which the Christian section reiterates *Hallelujah* 'with vigour and fervour' for twenty-one bars in frenzied competition with the *La li Allah* of the Mohammedan section.

Gradually the shouting dies away and the philosopher is left musing upon the vanity of the world and its ways—and we are left in sorrowful contemplation of the four most dismally uninspired pages Delius has ever given to the world. The chorus takes up the burden: 'All who are living know that death is coming, but at the touch of death lose knowledge of all things, nor have they remembrance more of the ways and doings of men on the earth where they were.' 'Therefore,' saith the Preacher (Eccles. ix. 7), 'eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart . . . Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of thy vanity . . . Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.' And the chorus murmurs over again: 'The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything.'

The second part of the *Requiem* begins with a song, for the baritone solo, in praise of his beloved who was 'like a flower among whose fragrant petals love made his dwelling.' 'I praise her,' he continues, 'above all other women who are poor in their being and so are poor in giving too. Were not the world the abode of dissemblers and were not men's hearts so impure, then all mankind would join me in praising my beloved. She gave herself to many and yet remained chaste and pure as a flower.' This section which is headed 'A la grande amoureuse' has been thought

by some to refer to Death in the guise of a lover. But in the absence of any authority for such a charitable supposition, one can only regard it as a symptom of revolt against the Christian ideal of chastity. A soprano solo follows: 'I honour the man who can love life and yet without base fear can die. He has attained the heights and won the crown of life . . . The sun goes down and evening spreads her hands in blessing o'er the world, bestowing peace. Night comes and binds our eyes with cloths of darkness in a long dreamless sleep. The soul of man sings but this only: Farewell, I loved ye all! and the voices of Nature sing in answer: Thou art our brother! And so the star of his life sinks back into the darkness whence it arose.'

The concluding section is a rhapsody of spring, in which is portrayed the awakening of Nature from its winter sleep. Finally, the chorus breaks into a chant of the eternal recurrence of all things in Nature and, after a very strange passage of wistful looking back in an overwhelming moment of regret and doubt, the work ends peacefully to the sound of distant bells and cuckoo calls.

The funeral march at the beginning and the beautiful elegy for the soprano alone represent Delius at his best. But two good passages can by no means make a masterpiece of a work that is otherwise mediocre. But in qualification of this harsh judgment one should add that Delius has in *A Mass of Life*, in *Sea-Drift, A Village Romeo and Juliet,* and many other great works, given us the standard by which we must judge his later output. Did we not know and love those other works, we might hear in the opening of the last section of the *Requiem* something more than a mere echo of a lovely passage in *A Song of the High Hills,* and the final rhapsody of Spring might appear less weak had we not the glorious *March of Spring* from *North Country Sketches* and the matchless *First Cuckoo in Spring* with which to compare it, to its great advantage.

Before embarking upon this curiously unsatisfactory work, Delius had already embodied his reflections upon the transitoriness of mortal life in a far more beautiful composition—*Song of Sunset,* originally called *Songs of Twilight and Sadness*—a cycle of intimate little lyrics by Ernest Dowson, a lover's requiem over lost illusions. The whole work is elegiac and retrospective: the sense of the past pervades it with a mournful glamour. Its mood is one of weariness, of passion that has burnt itself out and cries only for peace, of autumn that creeps unawares upon the soul when spring has passed over it unheeded. *Moritura* is the title of the first poem and the keynote of the work.

The chorus enters quietly in the very first bar with:

A song of the setting sun!
The sky in the west is red,
And the day is all but done:
While yonder up overhead,
All too soon,
There rises, so cold, the cynic moon.

There follows, to music that is more fevered than impassioned, a love-song, paraphrased from Propertius:

Dum nos fata sinunt oculos satiemus amore:
Nox tibi longa venit, nec reditura dies

And the chorus sings of the twilight of the year, where shadow and the darkness meet. As the work proceeds, through the lovely setting of 'Exceeding sorrow' and the 'Song of the waters of separation' to the little choral spring-song whose faint flicker of hope is extinguished by the thought that 'the spring of the soul cometh no more for you or for me,' it seems to grow greyer and more misty like an autumn evening falling to dusk, until there comes a song of utter numbness of spirit:

I was not sorrowful, but only tired
Of everything that ever I desired.

And then like an afterglow that shines through the mist with sombre radiance follows the final chorus, the *envoi* to life:

> They are not long, the days of wine and roses:
> Out of a misty dream
> Our path emerges for a while, then closes
> Within a dream.

This song-cycle affords a fine example of the way in which Delius imparts to his works a feeling of unity and cohesion fully as satisfying as the most elaborate devices of formal structure by means which totally elude a formal theoretical analysis. Except for one forlorn little theme that wanders through the score like a pale ghost, there is no thematic connection between the various songs; the structure of the work, the interrelation of the different movements, and the significance of their sequence are wholly spiritual. From the fevered agitation that follows on the quiet choral prelude, the work is a prolonged cadence, a gradual slackening of the pulse, a waning and a decrescence until the sunset radiance streams like a dye through the clouds, lighting them up for a moment, then fading out from behind them, leaving them vague, obscure, and colourless.[1] Never have evening and autumn found more perfect utterance. 'Forgive me my sadness,' said Zarathustra; 'forgive me that evening has fallen upon me.' But the melancholy brooding of eventide is no less integrally a part of us than the full-blooded assurance of noon and the mystical, half-drunken ecstasy of midnight. In Time these seasons are apart and opposed, but in Eternity they are but aspects one of another.

[1] The setting of 'Cynara,' Dowson's most perfect poem, which was to have formed the climax of the work, was wisely omitted, as tending to disturb the proportions and interrupt the mood-sequence of the whole.

Between the choral and the purely orchestral works of Delius we can draw no rigid distinction. Chorus and orchestra are not two separate bodies in his mind but organically related members of the great body of musical sound. The chorus is never pitted antiphonally against the orchestra after the practice of the older choral writers. Delius aims always at the coalescence of constrasting factors. At the first performance of *Songs of Sunset* he desired the chorus to remain seated while singing, to lend colour to the illusion of impersonal unity. The idea was not carried into practice, but it serves to illustrate his view of the function of the chorus in his works and is fully in keeping with the spirit of his choral style.

In *Appalachia* and *A Song of the High Hills* the chorus is used sparingly, with the effect that its entries are thrilling in their unexpectedness and its climaxes a crowning glory of sound. *Appalachia,* we read in a note prefixed to the score, 'is the old Indian name for Northern America. The composition mirrors the moods of tropical nature in the great swamps bordering on the Mississippi River which is so intimately associated with the life of the old negro slave population. Longing melancholy, an intense love for Nature, childlike humour, and an innate delight in dancing and singing are still the most characteristic qualities of this race.' Here the deep impression made on Delius by his life in Florida, which colours many of his early works, finds its mature utterance. The work consists of a lengthy introduction, fifteen variations on an old negro folk-song (curiously reminiscent of the first theme of the quartet in the last act of *Rigoletto*), and a choral epilogue which ends with an echo of the introduction.

Delius has thought of rewriting the choral epilogue so that the work may be performed at orchestral concerts where no chorus is available. In these days of economic stress promoters of concerts like to get their money's worth

out of their chorus when they employ one, and are inclined to fight shy of a long work which calls for a chorus chiefly to provide little exclamatory tailpieces to its different sections and never gives the singers a chance to *get going* until the very end. But these little choral doxologies that round off the variations are so full of mysterious and haunting suggestiveness that the work would lose much of its unique charm by their omission. The voices enter *pianissimo* and the effect is almost as though the spirits of the forces of Nature invoked by the music became suddenly articulate to acknowledge the master who had called them forth. No words are sung in these passages; but the epilogue employs a pathetic little snatch of negro verse relating to the separation of husband from wife and parent from child, when one might be sold for a slave to a distant plantation and the other left behind. The verse is doggerel but in the music it is transfigured into poetry. The opening words: 'Oh Honey, I am going down the river in the morning,' recall the song of the boatman in *A Village Romeo and Juliet* and seem to ring out the same strange call as of a voice from a far-off country.

If the form of *Songs of Sunset* seems like the very curve and cadence of a grey evening imprinted in a film of music, the structure of *A Song of the High Hills* is like the rugged outline of a great range of mountains whose heights are hidden from the eyes in cloud. The music is full of a sense of spacious solitudes and far horizons. The elation of the ascent is succeeded by a mood of ecstatic contemplation, and the soul rises through the pure still air to the very heights of rapture, losing all consciousness of itself as the mountain-tops are lost from the ken of man, among the wandering mists and the eternal snows. Certain commentators on the work have thought fit to see, in the relation between the chorus and the orchestra in this work, some such opposed relation as is supposed to exist between the

mountaineer and the peak which baffles his attempts to scale it. But the relation is more spiritual than that. It is only a false materialistic duality that can regard Man and Nature as separate entities pitted against each other in opposition; for the aspects of Nature are only the manifestations in terms of matter of diverse aspects of the soul of Man that ebbs with autumn and flows with the tide of spring, aspires to heaven with the mountains, sings in the winds, and runs with the rivers along the waters of time (see also p. 180).

In *Brigg Fair* we are on the plains in a pastoral country. The tune that gives its name to the work was sung by an old man in Lincolnshire to Percy Grainger and by him given to Delius. It is a Dorian tune and to ears unused to modal melodies may sound somewhat melancholy; but the old verses with which it is associated tell a happy tale of true love which for once in a way did run smoothly and bade fair to last until the green leaves withered in their summer prime. The work is not intended as a mere illustration of the poem. Delius calls it 'an English Rhapsody' and the music is redolent of the English countryside. The felicity with which the old tune yields to Delius' quite modern and individual treatment of it is marvellous, but not indeed surprising when one reflects that Delius would never have been moved to write a work round this tune but by a real spiritual affinity existing between it and his own music. And it is interesting to observe that he has, quite unconsciously, harked back to the very form in which the old English composers of the time of Queen Elizabeth were in the habit of adumbrating the popular melodies of their day—that is to say, the cumulative variation form which afterwards grew formal in the *passacaglia,* in which the theme is repeated, intact or with very slight rhythmical modifications, in each variation, always surrounded with a new harmonic, contrapuntal, or rhythmic embroidery. In

Delius' work there is a brief and lovely interlude in the middle—a kind of happy love-song, which is not derived from the main theme: otherwise the form is identical with that employed by John Bull, William Byrd, Giles Farnaby, and many another more than three hundred years ago. But at the time of writing Delius was probably unacquainted with their very names. This work seems to present peculiar difficulties to conductors; it has to my knowledge suffered greatly from the misunderstanding of more than one of them, so that a word or two of warning may not be amiss. I once saw a professor of music in a University town beat out the poor, lilting little tune with three heavy beats in a bar. This gentleman's subsequent oracle—piously repeated by his disciples—that *the more instruments you took away from a score of Delius, the better it sounded* (leading to the natural corollary that if you took all the instruments away, it would be best of all) might cause one to imagine his stupidity unique; but I have observed the same error elsewhere, as regards the theme. And on page 27 of the full score where the time signature changes from 3/4 to 4/4, the average conductor takes the variation twice too fast, for which he may perhaps be excused since Delius intends the beat to be doubled—he has directed the passage to be played 'slow, with solemnity'—and should have written 4/2 for 4/4. The right tempo is *quaver* = 80, *beating eight quavers to the bar.*

The first *Dance Rhapsody* which dates from the same period as *Brigg Fair* is almost exactly similar in form. After a quiet prelude, the chief dance theme is announced by the oboe, and save for a middle section, which is yet pervaded by echoes of the main theme, the whole work consists of repetitions of this one melody with harmonic variations that are kaleidoscopic in their ever-changing tones and colours. The listener's grasp of the unity and formal flow of the work depends very largely on the con-

ductor's skill in dovetailing one variation into another by means of a *rallentando* so slight that it does not break in upon the rhythm of the whole. Here again, though the outward form of the work is of the crudest and simplest character, its spiritual curve, so to speak, is wholly satisfactory. The climax of the work is not dynamic, but comes at the music's ebb, a metamorphosis of the dance theme played by a solo violin against a background of divided strings, an indescribable passage, 'wonderful, causing tears,' perhaps the most intense and *exalted* moment in all Delius' work. It has a wounding beauty which is all the more poignant for its evanescence—and which blinds one to the fact that the tumultuous coda, though completely satisfying in conception, does not and cannot ever quite come off in performance.

In a Summer Garden—the third orchestral poem of the period—is another open-air work with the sights and sounds of Nature for a setting. The score is prefaced by a quotation from Rossetti by way of dedication:

> All are my blooms and all sweet blooms of love
> To thee I gave while Spring and Summer sang.

But the title might mislead those who look for objective impressionism in Delius' music. The summer garden is no more than the background, the setting of his mood; one feels indeed that this work has a more intimate and personal programme than most of its kind. Yet, to the external eye, it appears to be built up of thematic scrappets that might well have been suggested by whispers of wind and the colloquy of birds. Certain passages suggest a kind of musical *pointillisme* as though the luminous effect of the whole were attained by a thousand little points of light and colour.

Paris: the Song of a Great City—a nocturne—dates from ten years earlier. Less typically Delius than *Brigg Fair* or

A Dance Rhapsody, it is more akin in style to the old type of symphonic poem. The programme annotator would be delighted to discover seven or eight distinct themes in as many pages at the beginning of the work, and dismayed to find that none of these are developed in the conventional manner. Furthermore, he would expect from the title Straussian 'programme-music,' but there is no programme to the work, nor is there any portrayal, scarcely indeed more than a suggestion, of external things. For Delius, Paris is not so much the capital city of France as a corner of his own soul, a chapter of his own memoirs. The superficialities of *La Vie Parisienne* have been dealt with by Offenbach, the trifler, and Charpentier, the vulgarian, with whom Delius would disdain competition.

There remain Delius' orchestral impressions of the seasons, in *North Country Sketches* and the two pieces for small orchestra. *On hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* and *Summer Night on the River.* These are certainly his finest achievements in purely orchestral music. To anyone quite unacquainted with his music the *First Cuckoo* might be presented as an epitome of his whole life's work. It is based upon a twofold melody; the first part is Delius' own, a sequence of phrases that echo each other like distant cuckoo calls, the second is derived from a Norwegian folk-song *I Ola dalom* ('In Ola Valley') which is to be found harmonized by Grieg in his Opus 66. Associated with the song is a legend of an old woman who, thinking her son had been kidnapped by the bogles and bugaboos of the hills, rang the bells of the neighbouring church in the hope of releasing him from their power. But Delius chose the theme for its musical beauty, without any thought of its traditional associations, and using it as a *motif* has painted in unforgettable tones the emotions of one for whom spring is not so much a season of riot and exuberance, fresh hopes and renewed vitality, as a vision of such sweet and tender love-

liness that the heart stands still in contemplation of it and the old unrest of the soul is put to sleep. In *North Country Sketches* we have mood pictures of autumn, when the 'wind soughs in the trees,' a *Winter Landscape,* and—significantly placed *after* the melancholy of autumn and the gloom of winter—the *March of Spring* over woodlands, meadows, and silent moors, portraying the gradual awakening of Nature from its winter sleep, the rising of the sap in the trees, the opening of the green leaves, and the blossoming of the flowers, until all Nature bursts into a pæan of delight and joy. Linked with these Nature impressions is a *Dance,* with no specific programme, though its uncertain, tentative beginning and abrupt conclusion lead one to picture it as a spell of fireside musing over the past, a tale within a dream—and one of the loveliest short pieces Delius has ever written.

IV

HIS MUSIC VIEWED AS A WHOLE

(*a*) THE LETTER

IN these days when the possession of a little money can, and does, procure for the merest mediocrity not only widespread publicity but performance at important concerts and musical festivals, it may seem remarkable to some that Delius who could at all times have afforded to blow his own trumpet should never have cared to do so. He was forty-three when his first big work was published, but he had been writing music for the past twenty years—music of such a character that, had he cared to use it for publicity's sake after the manner of the young composer of today, it would no doubt have hastened Europe's acknowledgment of his genius. But he preferred to give nothing to the world that he felt to be immature or below the level of the best of which he was capable.[1]

A composer who carries modesty and self-criticism to such a pitch is something of an enigma to our musical public. Here, they say, is a man sixty years old, who holds no official position in the musical life of his country, who does not teach in any of the academies, who is not even an honorary doctor of music; who, moreover, gives no con-

[1] There is one solitary exception—the unworthy *Legend* for violin and orchestra which is far below the average level of his earliest works. It is difficult to see why this piece should have been included in the 1899 concert where it must have sounded peculiarly out of place, or why Delius should have unearthed it for publication twenty-four years after its composition.

certs, makes no propaganda for his music, plays no instrument, nor even conducts an orchestra. Small wonder that he is neglected in favour of what one may with a certain degree of accuracy describe as the *press-gang* of British music. He lacks the talent, and indeed the desire, to keep himself continually in the public eye. But this is a temperamental matter, and it seldom happens that a talent for publicity is united in the same person with a creative mind of the first order.

In looking through the manuscripts of Delius' early works one is particularly struck by the fact that they display a virtuosity of technique, in the academic sense of the word, which gradually disappears as his own personal technique develops into an unmistakable style. The ready-made forms of the schools, with their artificial devices which seem to have been designed only to eke out an exiguous inspiration, are merely trammelling to the subtle imagination for which form and content are one and indivisible. But the realization, by experience and not in theory alone, that the form of a well-made work must necessarily be latent in its initial conception, even as the form of a flower is latent in its seed, is a slow and arduous process; and in the meanwhile the young artist must learn to build with the aid of such scaffolding as he can dispose of. Thus through formality he attains to form. For it must not be forgotten that the great masters who employed those forms that are now termed classical *created them anew with each succeeding work,* the so-called forms of the text-books being in reality no more than barren formulæ deduced by pedants from the masters' multifarious achievements. Delius is not seen at his best in those works whose form is dependent upon the development of contrasted themes in a certain relation pre-ordained by tradition. Occasionally, as in the Violin Sonata (a work laid aside for a number of years and completed long after its conception), there are redundancies

that seem due rather to anxiety to fill up the form than to any necessity of musical logic. But in the Concertos there are passages where the flow of expression is abruptly arrested in order to introduce a contrasted theme, and the natural development of the music in its own style seems somewhat cramped. The comparatively early Piano Concerto, originally designed in three separate movements, reappeared, some years after its initial performance, as a one-movement work. In the process of condensation the last movement (based on material afterwards employed in the Violin Concerto) was removed altogether, but the recapitulation of subject-matter from the beginning of the work that takes its place gives it but an artificial coherence which is by no means convincing. Virtually the work comes to an end at the close of the slow movement. Delius appears to have realized this shortcoming, for his later concertos are all cast in the single three-in-one-movement form—familiar in English chamber-music circles under the name of Phantasy, which consists of a short introduction, a brief first movement with two subjects but little development, a slow movement followed by an abbreviated return to the first movement, and an independent finale. Of the three later concertos, the first, for violin and cello, is by far the least satisfactory. To write a double concerto at all is something of a *tour de force*. It is not the kind of work that comes to one and clamours to be written. It will certainly contain a good many passages which would sound as well or better in a symphonic poem without the solo instruments, from which it follows that these, if they are to be kept continuously busy, will have to do a good deal of quite superfluous embroidery on the orchestral tissue. In Delius' work this is exemplified at a very early stage in the cello's laborious and pointless counterpoint to the prinicipal subject on its first presentation by the solo violin. The second theme is a purely orchestral conception to which the

soloists add nothing vital. The indubitable beauty of the melody of the slow movement is not enhanced by its strong family likeness to a lovely theme in *North Country Sketches* —of which it is far from being the equal—and the last section, which is little more than a peroration, is rhetorical where it should be eloquent. The stuff of which the work is made is characteristically, unmistakably Delian; but this concerto as a whole could only satisfy those for whom the hearing of any work of Delius provides a novel experience. To those acquainted with his masterpieces, it stands as an interesting but unsuccessful experiment.

All three concertos open with an introductory passage that is not connected thematically with the rest of the work. The Double Concerto starts off with one of those themes which, insignificant in themselves, seem to hold all sorts of surprises in store for their development. But in this instance the theme is not developed at all; it is merely repeated, somewhat perfunctorily, at the end of the work, where it sounds even less significant that it did at the beginning.

Of very different character are the two preludial bars of the Violin Concerto. They arrest the attention with compelling power. Then the solo violin sweeps in with a noble and heroic phrase which is rounded off, so to speak, with a smiling parenthesis, so that in the one sentence we have virtually two distinct themes. The second subject is no more than a passionate exclamation for the brass to which the violin assents in swift up-rushing arpeggios. The slow movement—a perfect miracle of wistful haunting loveliness—is evolved from two alternating but not contrasted themes, of which the second is characterized by a lilting, syncopated figure of a kind associated in most people's minds with Scottish folk-song. (It reappears, by the way, in two of the *North Country Sketches,* and in *A Poem of Life and Love,* having made its first appearance in the setting of Fiona Macleod's *Hy Brasil*, with the atmosphere and emotion of

which it is obviously associated.) A rhapsodical interlude in the form of an accompanied cadenza leads to a brief recapitulation, followed by a naïve and charming dance-theme, which, interwoven with reminiscences of the *adagio,* brings the Concerto to a quiet and beautiful conclusion. From beginning to end the work is one long impassioned monologue for the solo violin against an orchestral background. The protagonist is never for a moment relegated to a secondary position and this unbroken golden thread of melody binds the whole work together into a wonderful cohesion and unity. The 'Cello Concerto suffers from a rather lengthy introduction which has all the incongruity of a string of platitudinous and apologetic remarks prefixed to a very brilliant speech of a most accomplished orator. Otherwise it is as concise in form as its predecessor, with a slow movement of 'linked sweetness long drawn out,' which for sheer beauty of orchestral sound must surely be unexcelled in the whole range of modern music. In spite of the restrictions imposed by even so free an interpretation of traditional form as Delius has allowed himself, the two latest concertos exhibit to the full the chief characteristics of his mature style.

To define these characteristics is far more difficult than it would be to illustrate them by examples. Anyone who has ever heard a work of Delius will know that his chief power lies in his extraordinary harmonic resources. One might almost say that the *chord* is to him what the *note* was to the polyphonic composers, and that the melodic *line* is always seen in a higher dimensional aspect, so to speak, of changing chords. Yet Delius has no harmonic system which can be defined and analysed as readily as those of Debussy or Scriabin. His range of expression is infinitely wider than theirs and his limitations far less apparent. Harmony with Delius has always been more of an instinct than an accomplishment, and although his chromaticism is not radically

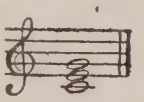
of a different order from that of Wagner and Chopin, it would not be altogether true or just to say that it was derived and developed from the study of these two masters. Delius' harmony lies just within the boundaries of tonality; but it never crosses them—in the sense in which we regard the later works of Schönberg as lying definitely beyond them. The principle of modulation, though not discarded, is pushed to the farthest extremity of chromatic licence, and it is the continual shifting of the tonal centres that gives his music its elusiveness and that peculiar quality of reticence which imparts to every phrase a suggestiveness and a hidden meaning that is never actually uttered. Polyphony with Delius is not the *cause* of the harmony as it is in true contrapuntal writing, but its apparent effect. Harmonic variation takes the place of what one may call the usual linear thematic development; counterpoints appear as decorative comments upon, rather than as integral factors of, the harmonic structure—and the very melody of a passage is often obviously dependent upon and conditioned by its harmonic background.

Sometimes, as in the case of the opening theme of *A Village Romeo and Juliet* and the tune of the first *Dance Rhapsody*, a diatonic melody is taken as a text for a series of most enchantingly varied discoursings of chromatic harmony; but there are examples of a contrary process, where a line of vocal melody which is neither organically essential nor intrinsically beautiful has been simply superimposed upon a harmonic texture which is already complete in itself. One does not need the fictitious support of any stereotyped and reactionary definition of what is or is not vocal to be able to see the æsthetic defects of certain lines of melody; those defects would be the same if the melody, instead of being sung, were played upon an instrument. One can offer no reasonable objection to any angularities of interval, or sudden leaps and falls, so long as they are

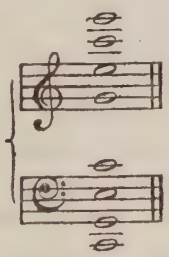
æsthetically justifiable in their context and expressive in proportion to their difficulty of execution. But they must carry with them a conviction of their perfect appropriateness and inevitability: on intimate acquaintance they must make us feel, as we feel about all good melodies, that not a note could be changed without changing and spoiling the melody. There are occasional passages for the voice in Delius' works—notably in the *Requiem*—which do not satisfy this condition; and in some of the songs for voice and piano—where the nature of the combination precludes the coalescence that can be obtained when the voice is treated as one instrument among the many others of the orchestra—the melodic curve of the accompaniment is far more significant than that of the voice, whose notes seem at times almost inconsequent, as though any note that tallied with the accompanying chord would have done equally well had it been selected at random. But, if the method of threading a woof of melody through a given warp of harmony has its disadvantages, it has, to outweigh them, very admirable virtues which differ conspicuously enough from those of the self-subsistent tune to render them a definite addition to the treasure-store of melody. And it is this division of the harmonic web into these component strands of melody which are never parallel but subtly interwoven with one another, one rising where another falls, that gives Delius' harmony so much inner vitality. This, I think, is the secret of his fascinating and very personal treatment of solo wind instruments in the orchestra; and if we are to look for a clue to the magic of his scoring in any external devices (which is a mistake, seeing that for Delius there is no such thing as scoring, the stuff of the music and its orchestral embodiment being conceived simultaneously and notated, even in the first sketches, in full score), we must concentrate our attention upon his extraordinary instinct for the right disposition and

registration of the notes compounding a chord.

The composer who first of all writes a work in the abstract, and then proceeds to score it, no doubt also begins by conceiving a kind of abstract of its harmonic basis which is afterwards elaborated in a corresponding manner. The truth of this conjecture is attested by the existence of such barbarities as the figured bass. But with Delius the relative importance of the different tones composing a chord is as important as the chord itself. For example, here is the common chord of C major:



and here, according to the ridiculously inadequate nomenclature musicians must perforce make use of for lack of a better, is the *same chord*:



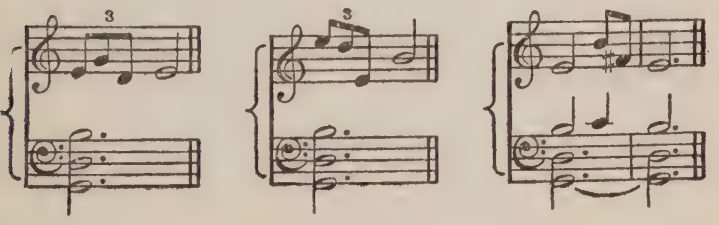
in a disposition so different as to impart to it a completely different colour and aspect.

The significance of a chord, its sonority and its colour, depend chiefly upon its range of pitch and upon its registration—that is to say, upon the distance between the highest notes and lowest notes and upon the choice of the octave in which certain notes, which its context will render more important than others, are doubled, the relation of these notes to the bass, and the resultant overtones which will contribute to the general effect. These considerations are

intrinsic to the chord itself and are not connected with the medium of sound—vocal or instrumental—by which the chord is conveyed to the ear. It is clear, for instance, that there will always be more essential difference between the two dispositions of the common chord instanced above than there could ever be between the different presentations of the first example that could be given by, say, three female voices, three trumpets, and a harmonium, or between the second example as played on the pianoforte with the aid of a sustaining pedal and as it would be sustained by a body of divided strings. And so we find but little difference of style when we turn to Delius' choral works and those in which the pianoforte plays a part. In writing for the pianoforte Delius has never been particularly happy. The limitations of the keyboard seem to have hampered him; his figuration is often somewhat perfunctory and the long sequences of chords, lacking the glow which the individuation of the varied voices of the orchestra would impart to them, tend to become a trifle square-faced and monotonous. It is but natural also that so essentially polyphonic a medium as the string quartet should prove too slender to support the weight of his harmonic mass-formations; but their employment in music for unaccompanied voices has been as successful as it is novel and original—to modern ears, although the Prince of Venosa was using them in his madrigals three hundred years ago with surprisingly similar effects. The chorus is used homophonically, impersonally, as though it were a multitudinous voice of winds or waters, and the effect in an 'impression of nature' like *On Craig Dhu* is overwhelming.

Save for an over-frequent cadence of descending sevenths which seems to be derived from Grieg, Delius has practically no tricks of style that could be stigmatized as mannerisms. He has, however, a most interesting and prodigiously effective method of achieving a sense of climax after every

conceivable variety of complexity of harmony would seem to have been exhausted, by suddenly presenting a mere harmonic skeleton clothed in the full panoply of orchestral magnificence. Examples may be seen towards the end of *Brigg Fair, Life's Dance,* the Pianoforte Concerto, and, in a certain measure, in the conclusion of *A Mass of Life.* And then there are those curious personal *Leitmotiven* which recur in one work after another, from the earliest to the latest, as the result of what Wordsworth called 'those arbitrary connections of feelings and ideas with particular words and phrases from which no man can altogether protect himself.' And it is well for those of us who would fain see music develop into an even more precise and accurate medium of communication between man and man, that he cannot so protect himself, for such personal confessions, peeping out from the texture of a great work, bring us very near to the heart of the composer, and afford us valuable glimpses into the mysterious creative processes of the musical faculty. It would be idle to enumerate these *Leitmotiven,* attaching to each one an arbitrary and perhaps quite unwarranted label binding down its 'meaning' to this, that, or the other thing which can be expressed in words; for the association of idea and motif is not deliberate and part of a constructive plan, as it was with Wagner, but instinctive and to a certain extent unconscious, intuitive, and musical, not verbal and intellectual. But to illustrate my point I quote three of them, assuring the student of musical psy-



5

chology that if he will thoroughly acquaint himself with the works of Delius (and for that matter, many another composer) he will find many other examples of this phenomenon.

In addition to these recurrent phrases, there are certain instances of similarity between passages associated with similar ideas or emotions in different works of different periods. This is entirely unconscious reminiscence, but it is an interesting sidelight on the working of the musical mind. For example, the theme associated with *la grande amoureuse* in the *Requiem* is identical with a phrase in the love-duet in *Margot-la-Rouge*; the melody heard on the fjord at night in *Fennimore and Gerda* reappears in *A Song of the High Hills*; the germ of the lovely passage in *A Mass of Life* where the spirit of life sings to Zarathrustra of the island they discovered far away beyond good and evil, is to be found in *The Magic Fountain* significantly allied with the words 'Far away in the western isles lies the fountain of eternal youth'; and the cadence of the theme of *Appalachia,* a work in which the great river stands as a symbol of the poignancy of parting, is heard again in *Songs of Sunset* at the point where the poet speaks of 'the sound of the waters of separation surpassing roses and melody.'

(*b*) THE SPIRIT

As Beethoven is the morning and Wagner the high noon, so Delius is the sunset of that great period of music which is called Romantic. And there is a spiritual image in this historical superscription. The art of Delius belongs to the evening of a great period. It has its roots upon the descending arc of life; it is cadent but not decadent. Its image is rather to be seen in the rich colours of the sunset fires

than in the cool dim greys of twilight from which all fire and brightness has faded away. But it is neighbour to night: it looks before and after, seeing the day that is past mirrored upon the darkness that is approaching.

The predominance of the purple patch is a sure signal of incipient decadence in art. The part grows greater than the whole and the whole lapses from lack of coherent design. Language itself becomes disintegrated in its over-ripeness—*faisandée*, to use the expressive term of Gautier—but the luxuriant fungus of decomposition hides for a while the traces of decay in the body in which it has taken root. But there is a brief period immediately preceding the setting-in of decadence and decay in art when the body can yet bear, and bear nobly, the weight of all the magnificence and splendour that the soul would put forth; and it is this golden hour that Delius has realized more fully than any musician that ever lived. Purple indeed there is in his works—not confined to patches but infused like a dye through whole compositions. His greatest passages occur, not haphazard in the midst of mediocre pages, or in isolation, bodiless as ghosts, as in the works of decadence, but in their inevitable and proper place, as spiritual climaxes conditioned by the span of that far-sighted logic which, in all the arts, is architecture. Of such transcendent passages the *entr'acte* from *A Village Romeo and Juliet* and the almost unbearably beautiful penultimate variation in the first *Dance Rhapsody* may be cited as examples. It is only on the very crest of a great epoch that an artist appears whose creative or consciously constructive genius is equal to the direction of so rich and luxuriant an inspiration as Delius has been endowed with. But his constructive power is not to be thought of as dissociated from his musical imagination; it is rather a quality of that imagination itself which ensures that all the imagination begets shall be incarnate in a body that is organically sound and whole. And

so we find the same wealth of imagination determined by the same sense of structure, balance, and proportion displayed within the limits of a little song as in the majestical architecture of *A Mass of Life*.

Wordsworth, a poet with whom Delius has more than a superficial affinity, set out, when embarking upon his *Lyrical Ballads*, 'to make incidents and situations interesting by tracing in them, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature: chiefly as far as regards the manner in which we associate ideas in a state of excitement . . . the feeling developed (in these poems and, as one may add, in the music-dramas of Delius) gives importance to the action and situation and not the action and situation to the feeling.' And he proceeds to a definition of poetry as 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings,' taking its origin from '*emotion recollected in tranquillity.*' This last phrase may be found exemplified, word for word, in the works of Delius. *Emotion*—the overflow of powerful feelings—is always the primal impulse and inspiration. Objectivity in music belongs to the phases of its decadence; particularization is no part of music's province. The generalizations of musical emotion must necessarily seem crude when translated into the cold formulæ of words: but the subtleties into which music can divide them are infinitely beyond the descriptive capabilities of language. We need music not because it is a substitute for but because it is an infinite extension of the powers of spoken language. *Life's Dance*, one of the earliest of Delius' orchestral poems, was originally associated with a preposterous programme derived from some Danish drama. But in the revised version of the work the programme was dropped, its underlying emotions being abstracted and re-presented to us in music *sub specie æternitatis*. And, when we speak of the natural beauties of his surroundings as having provided Delius with a musical impulse, we mean that he has cap-

tured and reproduced in his music not the merely sensuous elements of a landscape, with which impressionistic composers too often content themselves, but the correlative emotion it awakens in the sensitive soul, the state of mind which, in a metaphysical sense, it exists solely to express.

But the emotion which gives rise to the music is not directly notated: for moments plucked in a fine frenzy wither before their secret essences can be distilled. The emotion must be *recollected:* and the process of recollection, in this sense of the word, is creative rather than reminiscent. For the initial emotion will have called into activity an impulse that had long lain dormant in the soul's recesses, awaiting the word of secret correspondence which alone could waken it into action, and it is from the union of these two principles, the initial emotion and that unknown correlative which it finds in the creative mind, that the work of art comes into being.[1] Its conception may be unconscious and the period of gestation may extend over years: as with Wordsworth when he gazed upon the daffodils—

> . . . but little thought
> What wealth the show to me had brought.

One feels that all Delius' music is evolved out of the emotions of a past that was never fully realized when it was present, emotions which only became real after they had ceased to be experienced. 'The golden moments of our life fly past us and we see nothing but sand; the angels come to visit us and we only know them after they are gone.' Here, perhaps, we have the explanation of the sadness that is intermingled with the serenity and sweetness of the con-

[1] 'The explanation of delight in sensible beauty, so far as it can be explained, is that when the soul perceives something akin to its own nature it feels joy in it; and this it does when indeterminate matter is brought under a form proceeding from the real being of things' (Thomas Whittaker—*The Neo-Platonists*).

ception of spring revealed in *The First Cuckoo;* for it is a spring of the soul which cannot blossom until the autumn has come, that has so little time to stay. And so we are again confronted with the paradox of past and present. The very desire to recapture and embalm the past is a longing that strives to overleap time's limitations; for time is the great enemy of the soul that longs for the Infinite. The apparent victories of time over the soul, in separation and in going apart, are Delius' predominant theme: but in his music there is always a smile of assurance which seems to tell us that time itself is no more than the great illusion of the world. It brings to the mind an echo of an imminent beauty greater than the ear can hear, that whispers to us of an unchanging garden from which we have been banished for a season: and we feel that all the sorrow of the world springs from this sense of exile, and that all beauty is but a partial unveiling of something ever-present and *not* other than that which we know—for when we speak of this world and a world beyond that lies in the future we confuse the issue by a verbal duality which has no real meaning. 'Into another world,' as John Donne says in one of his sermons, 'no man is gone, for that heaven which God created and this world, is all one world.' Yet it is curious that Donne, for all his faith in the resurrection, is obsessed by the horror of the worm in the grave, and Delius, the unbeliever, proclaiming in his *Requiem* the soul's extinction, yet gives us intimations of immortality on every fine page of his music: and nowhere does he speak to the spiritual ear with more definite assurance than in his perfect setting of that poem of Fiona Macleod called *Hy Brasil,* with its alluring, haunting cadence: 'Come away, come away!' Now *Hy Brasil* is the name given in the old Celtic mythology to the Hesperides that lay where the last stars touch the sea. But in the Celtic legends it was not through the gates of death that these islands of the

blessed were attained. Rather did they stand as a symbol of that mystical victory of the soul over the circumstances of mortality, when the consciousness transcends the very conception of death and cries in laughing triumph, 'Where is thy sting?' All the old legends of the adventurers who assayed 'to sail beyond the sunset and the baths of all the western stars' are veiled records of adventures wholly spiritual. For those who attained, there was indeed no death: for they were translated like Enoch, and thenceforward they walked with God. For Delius, as for Traherne and Blake and many another mystic, Heaven is but the world transfigured and interpreted by spiritual vision. There is no 'world' that is common to all mankind. Every man lives in a world of his own creating, which is small or great, hideous or beautiful, according to the stature and disposition of his soul. And those who see, in all the manifestations of Nature, a fullness, a richness and loveliness that would for very excess break through the barriers of time and change and overflow into the Infinite may well deride the materialist's heaven of harps and glass which those have feigned who never saw the world aright. Whoever has known true ecstasy has already encompassed past and future, and having once attained is initiate, immune from disillusion. He is at one with Nature and strides fearlessly into the darkness, knowing that he will not fall, certain that the great river of separation comes in the end to the sea where all things are united. So he achieves within himself an inner harmony and peace—*tranquillity;* which is not so much the 'central peace subsisting at the heart of endless agitation' as an enfolding calm that is wrapped about a troubled and unresting heart.

The modern spirit in music is impatient, unreflective, restless, and impetuous, for it is the spirit of an age of disintegration. There is very little tranquillity in the music of our time, and such emotion as it contains is rather the

instantaneous record of sensation than a quintessence distilled by long processes of meditation. Serenity seems to have forsaken music for a while; it is, at any rate, almost impossible to name any living composer, save Bernard van Dieren, in whose work this quality is conspicuous or even dimly apparent. But it is one of the essential qualities of the great art of all ages, and its presence in every work of Delius is one of the surest tokens of his immortality. The message of his music is one of ultimate assurance and peace. It is full of a great *kindliness* which makes us feel akin to all things living and gives us an almost conscious sense of our part in the great rhythm of the universe. And as the lonely soul turns to the starry host for comfort and companionship, so may we turn to this music and hear reverberated in the tones of a lonely singer 'the voices of the innumerable multitudes of Eternity.'

ADDITIONS
ANNOTATIONS AND COMMENTS

by Hubert Foss

(Page numbers in parentheses in the following comments refer to Warlock-Heseltine's text, as reprinted in this volume.)

THE only authority for the statement (p. 29) that the Delius family is of Dutch origin would appear to be Frederick's own to Heseltine; though Beecham repeats it in his memoirs, Clare Delius, his sister, stoutly denies it in her book; she also adds a denial of Jewish ancestry, but it might here be added that Jelka Delius came from partly Jewish stock, for she was of the Moscheles family. Ethnographical deductions should not be based upon musical internal evidence; yet a student of this music may be excused if he finds no trace of Dutch racial or geographical characteristics in Delius' works. There is much of the German 'mist sculptor' therein, but the cultural background would appear to be partly French, partly Nordic, with the hills of Yorkshire and Scandinavia as a landscape behind the mind's window overlooking the Loing, with the Forest of Fontainebleau around the scene, and with all the masterpieces of the Barbizon painters who loved this landscape informing his mind. From that river and its banks, so absorbing in their beauty, sprang his music.

A middle-aged man's reminiscences of his early family life and upbringing are notoriously untrustworthy, coloured

as they must be by childish hopes and vanities only half recalled, by prejudices acquired early and hardened later, by other prejudices acquired from experience about methods of proper nursery training, by the sentimentality of lost beliefs and rose-coloured childish affections. And the point is especially true of one member of a large household, even of a less individual person than the composer. The Delius family consisted of fourteen children—ten girls and four boys, one girl and one boy dying in infancy. Like many other large families, this one was not united. Clare Delius tells us: 'our numbers precluded such a desirable state of affairs.' Marriages divided them as well (one suspects) as other factors, and she writes 'I was the only one in the family who after my father's death kept in touch with Fred. The others had hardly any associations with him. He once visited my mother, when she was living in Windsor in 1912, but that I believe was the last occasion on which he saw her. He was present at my father's funeral, but that visit of ceremony was almost the last contact he made with the family, except through myself and my daughters.'

Frederick's own account, presumably as given to Heseltine (pp. 30-2), needs a good amount of supplementing, and this Clare Delius amply provides in her book. Her recalling of 'Claremont,' the house at Bradford, is worth reading entire for its own sake; it gives a clear and vivid picture of both the home and the town. To pick out a few details is to blow away the atmosphere she had breathed into her memories; only a few significant additions and comments can be made here.

There was plenty of love for music, but it was coupled with the belief—a very English sentiment that persisted strongly until recent years, nor has even yet died out—that music comes from elsewhere, and is certainly not a fit profession for members of a respectable gentleman's

ménage. Heseltine (pp. 32-3) tells of the lasting reaction on the composer's musical likes and dislikes that 'this surfeit of good things had'; Fenby goes much farther, and shows that there was very little music that he could tolerate attending to except his own. 'You needn't ask me to listen to the music of the Immortals. I can't abide 'em. I finished with them long ago.' So Fenby reports him saying, and describes his library as consisting of only 10 full scores, four by Strauss, and one each by Liszt, Wagner, Chabrier, Debussy, Ravel, and Busoni, along with Beethoven's symphonies 'many of the pages still uncut!' As for English music, he is recorded as saying, 'I've never heard of any!'

The regime at Claremont was a rigid one of discipline, with *paterfamilias* as the pivotal tyrant. Was it more rigid or more strict than that of thousands of family households of the period? Because home discipline has slackened during the intervening years, exactly as family numbers have dwindled from fourteen to five, and even two, we are inclined today to look back upon this or that particular household as if it were indeed particular and not general. The idea of Prussian discipline was not abhorrent in the 1850's and 1860's, nor was the *hausfrau* the kind of joking symbol of down-trodden woman that she became after the Kaiser's war started.

Clare Delius' sketch of her father does not minimise the rigours of that home-life. 'He was a remote being, an iron disciplinarian,' she writes, 'masking the affection I am convinced he bore towards us with an air of severity which never varied. His lightest word was law.' And, she makes it clear, his prejudices about behaviour, dress, health, and the habits of daily life and commerce were as tough as steel and as inflexible as granite. When the distinguished musician who was for so long critic for the *Yorkshire Post* praised the 1899 Delius concert played in London (p. 56 ff.), Delius *père* ignored the event save for the one break-

fast-table remark: 'I see Fritz has given a concert'; her account of the scene has the chill of ice. 'Even after we had grown up, my father tried to exercise a discipline over us which entered into the minutest details of our lives' (on another page); 'among his prejudices was a hatred of the pipe,' and there follows a family anecdote.

Despite this outwardly harsh figure that she presents, the sister is much more convincing in her sympathy with the father than her brother was. The latter could write (1913) revilingly of his upbringing and previous foundations as 'thoroughly rotten' (he meant spiritually), and in the same year (both letters to Heseltine): 'I do not see why you should sacrifice the most important thing in your life to your mother. You will certainly regret it if you do, later on. Children always exaggerate the duty they have to their parents. Parents very seldom sacrifice anything at all for their children . . . I was in exactly the same position when I was your age and had a considerably harder fight to get what I wanted.'

That seems to be a very biassed pronouncement, even if we allow for its arguing from the particular to the general; and certainly it is one that throws less light on father than on son himself. No doubt Julius Delius was a Victorian martinet; but I wonder if that derided figure is any funnier in the long galleries of time than the 'children-must-not-be-thwarted' parents of today, than the rustic craftsmen and labourers, than the Elizabethans with their teen-age university students, than Goldsmith's schoolmaster, or even than the Spartans. I find the lordly outlook of the young on their fogey parents no less trying now than I did the normal discipline of up-springing youth 35 years ago. Eighty years make often a gap of humour for a later generation, while 800 become history.

Julius Delius, as presented by his daughter Clare, is a character, but he is not a caricature. She makes it clear

that he was an abnormally strict but wholly fair man. His domestic accounts, she tells us, show that 'he spent the enormous sum of thirty-seven thousand pounds on the education of his children . . . I question whether there was any adequate return for the expenditure . . . but it does show what I am concerned to prove, that my father, according to his lights, desired to do his very best for us . . . beneath his mask of remoteness and severity.' That he was incapable of foreseeing the genius of his son before it had blossomed, and failed to accept his musical offering from a member of his own family, may seem insensitive and obtuse to us who have the whole of Frederick's outpouring before us to study; but we can hardly call it reprehensible. 'My father had a ledger mind—at any rate as far as artistic pursuits were concerned. He liked to see the credit total and the debit total. And the entries on Fred's debit account were glaring.' Bradford and other cities' business men have been known to subsidise artists and composers in their early days; but few, one recalls, have so treated their own sons—too near home to be observable or palatable, such genius! 'It is all very well to say,' writes Clare 'in the light of after events that my father should have recognized genius, and have used his wealth to enable that genius to develop in the atmosphere it needed. The fact remains that my father did not recognize Fred's genius'—nor, to be honest, did a thousand other people of subtler musical understanding and greater penetration into the ways of the creative mind. 'He supported Fred handsomely all through his youth, and except for those months that he was lost in America, through most of his adolescence he continued to pay him an allowance until he was 36 or 37. And if in his will he deducted, with meticulous care, all the expenses he had been put to from Fred's share of his estate, this, many will agree, I think, was an act of impartiality and justice.'

Pretty but idle are the speculations that may be aroused by the relationship between this father and this son. Even had one known both characters in personal intimacy (an almost impossible feat), any deductions from the interplay of their oddly strong but differing minds would be purely imaginative—of the nature of 'Oh, that it were so!' The ordinary reaction of younger against older seems to have been suitably violent. But the curiosity is, surely, rather how many of his father's traits Frederick developed as he grew older—the rigidity, the Northern hardness of purpose, the exclusiveness (on quite slender grounds of taste) of personal likes and dislikes, the fastidiousness, and so on. We may even include the fatherliness, for, as I have mentioned, Frederick liked to father younger people, but always with a view to their improvement according to his lights. Those lights were not Julius'; but the instinct of rearing a family by precept was inherited.

Clare Delius paints a picture of the young Fred as a 'gallant, handsome, mischievous boy, always seeking adventures, always in trouble,' and adorns it with amusing anecdotes of his running away, of his practising circus-tricks, and of his re-enacting last night's pantomine at home. He was anything but a dreamer; for all his love of music, he was an active and vigorous lad. He excelled at cricket, a game in which he had a life-long interest; Eric Fenby tells how almost as soon as he arrived at Grez, Delius was talking about the cricket festivals at Scarborough and how he used himself to play in matches in the nearby villages. He was a born horseman. And underlying many of Heseltine's early pages, we can feel Delius' desire to be 'over the hills and far away.'

This *Wanderlust* appears to have been ingrained in the composer's character from birth, and showed itself in early as well at later years. Clare Delius writes that 'he was always talking, like children talk, of the remote countries he

intended to explore when he was a man.' The Florida episode and his later return visit are but a single example; before the orange-grove was taken, Delius (pp. 36-7) 'spent whole days in the library, poring over maps and books of travel . . . .' At first the physical confines were the Yorkshire Moors, where his sister and he often took long walks, during which (she recounts) he was peculiarly sensitive to the notes of bird-song. That first love for the moors around his birthplace stayed with him all his life, as we know from his visits to his sister, from his *North Country Sketches* of 1913–14, from Fenby's reports, and from his unfulfilled thought of making an opera out of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. The so-called commercial travelling journeys for the family woollen business gave this instinct some outlet. Beecham tells, in his chapter called 'A Happy Year (1908–9)', how he 'went to Norway to meet Delius,' with whom he 'had planned a long walking tour in parts little frequented by the average tourist. It was lucky for me' (Beecham continues) 'that I was in pretty good physical condition at that time . . . for Delius proved to be a first-class mountaineer and a pedestrian of untiring energy; in the lower land of the dales, Delius would procure a rod and sit peacefully fishing for hours.' In the letters to Heseltine we find sentences such as this of 1912—'I should love to wander about the Welsh hills with you and hope to come to see you next September'; or this (of Cecil Gray's house in Cornwall in 1917)—'You must be living in a lovely spot. I should love to come over and stay with you—but how to get across the channel dry! Your description of the country in Cornwall tempts me mightily. I should delight in such scenery. I have always loved the far, wide distance.'

It would seem paradoxical that one so strongly moved by the *Reiselust* should decide to bury himself in a small French village near Fontainebleau, and cruelly ironical that such an one should be so long pinioned by an

insidiously creeping paralysis. Perhaps the paradox is made smoother by Delius' letter to Heseltine in Ireland of May 19, 1918, in which he writes: 'So you have been in the wilderness—a wonderful place and the only place to find oneself after a prolonged sojourn in towns; one gathers such a lot of dross that ultimately it smothers one's real self. I was also in the wilderness in Florida, and have since never been able to live long in a crowd.' Here we find but one more example of the duality of Frederick's nature—his musical character and his personal character in parallel variance with each other. For though he was not the dreaming, mooning type of boy, there is no question that he dreamed. Clare Delius goes so far as to explain this odd division thus—that 'his desire was the natural reaction of a healthy boy—to imitate those adventures and to taste the joy of those experiences . . . But being baulked of any chance of doing this . . . he would rush back . . . straight to the schoolroom. There he would seat himself at the Erard and begin to improvise, turning all those adventures he had just heard of into music.' Cecil Gray (in *Musical Chairs*) reinforces this view of the boy by saying of the adult that once he had heard the negroes singing in Florida, it was 'the rapture of this moment that Delius is perpetually seeking to communicate in all his most characteristic work'; which statement one may fairly modify by altering 'this moment' to 'some moment of great beauty or emotion which he had experienced.'

There can be little doubt that his improvising was nostalgic, harmonic, and immediately emotional (p. 39). Fenby tells how Jelka Delius, of musical upbringing, had heard no improvisation in her youth 'that bore the slightest resemblance to that of Delius, either in mood or manner. Whereas everyone else improvised on easily recognizable themes, with Delius there were no themes, just chords. When the mood to extemporize was on him, he always

followed the same procedure. He would start very quietly and dreamily, moving along slowly and, for the most part, chromatically in a rhapsodic procession of chords from one leisurely climax to another, until the music culminated in a tremendous outburst; then, with many tender dallyings by the way, it would end as peacefully as it had begun.' Though he always used the piano when writing his music, the composer was no expert pianist. But again we meet here his forcefulness. He could build a dream world positively. When he was dreaming on the Florida plantation and finally (if there was finality then) decided to forsake all for music, he seems to have attacked his newly-hired piano with great energy and persistence. The most complete picture of this manifestation of the man's duality is that given by Fenby in his description of life at Grez-sur-Loing in 1928. 'There was nothing of the sickly, morbid, blind composer as known by popular fiction here, but a man with a heart like a lion, and a spirit that was as untamable as it was stern . . . once you had crossed the threshold of that great door to the street you found yourself in another world —a world, peaceful and self-sufficient, which centred round the figure of Delius. It was a world with its own laws, its own standards of right and wrong, in all things, its own particular sense of beauty and its own music. It had been created for music-making.' This vigorously constructed, remote world of dreams was Delius' heritage to us; from that created entity of civilization, the beauty of his music dripped as honey does from the cells of the beehive. Donald Tovey has written of 'the almost oriental depth of meditation' of the Violin and Double Concertos. And Fenby reports a conversation during which Delius told him how in Florida he gradually learnt the way, but 'it was not until years after I had settled at Grez that I really found myself. Contemplation, like composition, cannot be taught.'

In the history of modern English music, the Solano

orange grove has attained a mythological place comparable to that of the vale of Tempe or the Nemisian grove in ancient cultures. As with most romantic and quasi-legendary places, we know in fact very little about it, save the vivid pictures given by Heseltine (pp. 37 *et seq.*); other sources of information at present extant do not greatly add to our knowledge; Clare Delius' chapter about it should be read for itself, but one or two points may perhaps be adduced here about this period.

Thus (p. 39) Heseltine mentions 'one or two little pieces' already composed; Delius' sister recalls his first song, written towards the end of his schooldays at Isleworth, and it can hardly be imagined that he had not put down on paper during those five or so years some of his improvisatory dreams; the song, a duet setting of 'When other lips,' appears to exist among the sister's files, and though no doubt rightly kept away from universal public gaze, would be of great interest to a student of the later music.

That Frederick was no orange-planter, and set his mind against being one after his first weeks, is palpable. It would however appear that the grove itself was in part responsible for the financial and agricultural failure of the episode, for Solano (we are told) 'was too near the frost line for it ever to have become a successful orange plantation.' Reports of visitors quoted by Clare Delius show that her brother was indifferent to the need to control or combat natural conditions. Of the father's emissary, Mr. Tattersfield, we know little but that Fred divided his time between 'furious energy' at music or 'on the river in his boat,' his old nigger servant singing to him. Brother Ernest tried to grow tomatoes there for a short period, but soon moved away. After that, the manager seems to have carried on the labours of cultivation with scanty success, and (writes Clare) 'in 1924 Fred told me that he had practically given the place to a relative of Dr. Haym's, the musical

director at Elberfeld, and my brother added that he believed the present occupants of the grove had turned it into a tobacco plantation.' Further enquiries made on the sister's behalf 'drew a complete blank. There was no trace of the house where my brother had lived, and all recollection of him had faded from the neighbourhood.' This extinction was foreseen by Delius—at least, envisaged as a forewarning—in a letter written by Delius to Heseltine on Nov. 24, 1915, the latter having thought of Solano as a refuge for the poor and consumptive novelist, D. H. Lawrence. Delius wrote: 'California is a far better climate than Florida; my orange grove has been left to itself for twenty years and is no doubt only a wilderness of gigantic weeds and plants. The house itself will also have tumbled down. Even if the house had been inhabitable I should not have advised Lawrence to live in it. The place is five miles from any house or store. Life is frightfully expensive on account of the isolated situation. One lives off tinned foods, and a servant costs one dollar fifty cents a day . . . To let him go to Florida would be sending him to disaster.'

Of the subsequent period spent at Jacksonville and Danville (pp. 43 *et seq.*), Clare Delius gives some interesting supplementary information obtained from enquiries made on her behalf. It is too long to quote here, but ought to be read by anyone interested in Delius, for it shows both the man's charm and his persistence. He was certainly not forgotten, in those places where he taught music, almost half a century after he had left the neighbourhood; and the personal memories of the ladies she quotes are both touching and illuminating.

About the fruitful Parisian years little information is at present available that adds appreciably to Heseltine's and Delius' own words (pp. 47 *et seq.*). Picture as our imaginations may *la vie de Bohème,* the facts remain in the list of composition that the final, almost monastic devotion to

work had come upon him, and show that these, if not his greatest years of achievement, were preparatory to the fuller period to follow. Clare Delius gives a picture of his appearance at this time 'culled from various family sources.' Delius, she tells us, 'was tall and retained his slim, graceful figure through middle age till the end of his life . . . He curiously enough impressed some people as belonging to the Latin type while others maintained that he was purely Teuton. He had very beautiful hands . . . He was quite without self-consciousness of any sort or kind, and there are few great artists, I imagine, who were ever so perfectly simple and natural as Fred was. Though he inherited from my father a distinct fastidiousness, he was extremely affable and engaging.' Norman O'Neill, says his biographer Derek Hudson, referred to 'the charm and gaiety of his prime.' Other points made by Clare Delius are his sense of humour— 'his laugh was infectious'; his freedom from mannerisms; the fact that 'he never talked about himself'; and his incurable optimism—he was 'always believing that everything would come right. Worries had a knack of falling from his shoulders like discarded garments. Though he was always in hot water at home, I never once remember him losing his temper.'

Important as was the formative and developing influence of the Parisian years, Delius' greatest gain from them was his wife, Jelka Rosen, both spiritually and materially. Heseltine's tribute to her (p. 48) is as prophetic as it is true. Throwing up her career as a painter, she devoted her entire life to Frederick, for all the many years before his illness began to cripple him. No separate memoir of such a woman, however richly deserved, could ever be written, for she immersed herself utterly in her husband's music, in the making and the management of it, in providing the bodily and spiritual needs of the remote thinker, and in continual literary assistance in his operas and vocal works. Fenby's

book contains a large number of passages about her life at Grez from 1928 onwards, which add up into a splendid monument to her. One passage runs: 'One thing was ever uppermost in my mind at Grez, and that was that only there, and with such constant care as his wife lavished on him, could he go on living. Her name deserves a very prominent place on the scroll of those who have given themselves unstintingly for others.'

A fuller account of and tribute to Jelka Delius may be read in the sympathetic study of her by the late Dr. Heinrich Simon printed in the *Monthly Musical Record* of December, 1935. He leaves us in no doubt that it was the young painter Jelka (he describes her as a *pointilliste* in style) and her friends who first discovered the village of Grez-sur-Loing and the house there, and asserts that her mother bought it. It seems, according to Simon, that she was but one of a number of girls attracted by the young Delius, and to have been surprised that she was the chosen one. After their marriage, Simon says of Grez and Delius, 'Jelka was the guardian of this garden.' 'She was a splendid story-teller,' he writes, comparing her tales with those of de Maupassant. Then he adds: 'Her sacrifice was great . . . Through Jelka [Delius] fulfilled his mission, and because of her he was able to fulfil it . . . Strength through devotion has become a rare quality in our time. It is good to know that it still exists.'

Not till towards the end of his chapter on 'Delius' Life' (pp. 71-2) does Heseltine describe the house at Grez-sur-Loing, where all the most important works were written. That description is short but vivid. A much fuller description appears in Clare Delius' book, while the whole of Fenby's is permeated with its atmosphere; both should be read *in extenso* for proper understanding of the composer's self-created circumstances of life. One may note, however, one curious omission from Heseltine's picture: there is no men-

tion of the pet jackdaw named Koanga after the composer's opera. It is curious because black pets, especially cats, were favourites with Heseltine, in whose biography Gray gives an account of 'his gigantic neuter black cat which shared with its master a veritable passion for the music of Delius to which it would listen for hours, sitting on the lid of the piano in a state of beatific ecstasy. All other music, however, it hated.'

To the full account of the 1899 concert (pp. 56 *et seq.*) three small points may be subjoined. The conductor of it, Alfred Hertz, became conductor of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra in 1915, having held the same position with the Metropolitan Opera House, New York City, since 1902. He retired in 1929, and died in San Francisco in 1942. Clare Delius supplements the press notices quoted by Heseltine by a favourable one from the *Yorkshire Post,* which is obviously informed by a projective judgment and not only by local news-interest. Thirdly, Fenby, reminding us that Frederick had to wait till he was 37 before he had the experience of hearing his own orchestral music, recalls the composer's telling him that 'after that concert he was so conscious of the faults of his music that he could not rest, but left London for Grez early the next morning, so eager was he to take up his sketches of *Paris* and apply the techincal knowledge that he had just acquired.'

Chapter VIII of Clare's 'memories of my brother' is important for two reasons—in that it quotes at some length the press notices of the concert of 1907, and in that it records her and our gratitude for Sir Thomas Beecham's 'ungrudging championship' which the music played therein won from him. 'How much,' she writes, in a simple moving sentence, 'Fred owed to Beecham it is impossible to calculate.' Nor is it necessary for me to implement Heseltine's tribute (pp. 63 *et seq.*). Prolong this 10 years' record, in imagination and by knowledge of facts and perform-

ances, until this present day, add to it the three outstanding events of the Delius Festivals of 1929 and 1946 and the recordings of the Delius Society as more spectacular and immediate to the public attention, add also to it a sympathy and a knowledge in performing the music that have matured and increased during the years. Heseltine's testimony remains true and only not sufficient in that it perforce omits Beecham's continuing belief in and support of the music for more than a subsequent quarter of a century. To attempt to express here further praise and gratitude would be otiose, and indeed verging on the impertinent.

Those first fourteen peaceful years of the twentieth century were a wonderful creative period in Delius' life—a priod of almost incredible imaginative fertility. With all his limitations of idiom, his range of subject and thought was extremely wide. Though Heseltine devotes more than half his book to a study of the works up to 1923 (pp. 74–119) and to 'His music viewed as a whole' (pp. 116–138), a glance at the titles and dates of composition of 1900–14 may be timely here. The principal works are: 1900–1 *A Village Romeo and Juliet,* 1902 *Appalachia,* 1903 *Sea-Drift,* 1904–5 *A Mass of Life,* 1906–7 *Songs of Sunset,* 1907 *Brigg Fair,* 1908 *In a Summer Garden,* 1908 *A Dance Rhapsody* (No. 1), 1908–10 *Fennimore and Gerda,* 1911 *Life's Dance,* 1911-2 *A Song of the High Hills,* 1913–14 *North Country Sketches.* Apart from the creative energy outpoured here, the mere physical labour of composition (for none but large-scale work is here catalogued) must have been prodigious, even for one who solely occupied his time with composition.

Small wonder that neither in Heseltine nor elsewhere do we find more than glimpses into that withdrawn but active life in Grez. There is, no doubt, correspondence preserved, about performances, with publishers, with friends, but so far little of it is open to the public eye. From the various

accounts and stories scattered among the biographies and reminiscences the reader, if he consults the books and uses their index pages properly, can gain for himself supplementary pictures of Delius—of the man as well as the composer, and of the atmosphere that by an almost chemical process of the mind he created around himself. The most one can do is to refer the reader to these sources, picking out here and there one or two points of relevant interest.

Among Frederick's personal friends and most sympathetic admirers was the composer, Norman O'Neill (1875–1934). A London-cultured Irishman, O'Neill was one of the most delightful people it has been my lot to know; Fenby records that 'Delius had already spoken of him with the greatest affection, and when they were together I could see that O'Neill was one of the very few people whom he loved.' His tragic death at the age of 59 through an unnecessary road-accident was a loss to us all and to English music; one cannot help, at this moment of writing, wondering how his full memories of Delius would have read, for he was not blind in his love. Fortunately his biographer, Derek Hudson, has left us a considerable amount of illuminating matter which should be eagerly consulted by enquirers after Delius' life and personality. There is much recording of good talk and a revealing letter, the last our composer ever wrote to his friend in 1929. Delius was from 1907 onwards, we learn, a frequent visitor to O'Neill's house in Pembroke Villas, Bayswater, London. He actually became 'vice-president' of 'The Musical League'—surely the only example recorded of his undertaking public duties? O'Neill calls him 'a mainspring' in the movement, but one may perhaps attribute this to the Irishman's modesty and to the other's projective wisdom in talk and correspondence. O'Neill also recounts with what pleasure Delius accepted his cheque from the Royal Philharmonic Society for conducting *In a Summer*

Garden (p. 70). It should be noted that, according to O'Neill, the first signs of his oncoming illness showed themselves first in 1911. It was in 1910, as I have written, that the friendship with Heseltine began; this early beginning of disability may perhaps throw some light on the Heseltine correspondence.

An interesting but minor point referred to by O'Neill is Delius' interest in and particularity about food; further allusions are made to this fastidiousness of diet by Beecham, Fenby, and others, and there is no doubt that even the paralytic clutch did not weaken Delius' liking for good things to eat and drink.

Supplementary information about the relations between Delius and Busoni (pp. 46, 69) is given by Professor Edward Dent in his biography of the second-named. Grieg introduced Busoni to Delius in Leipzig in 1886, as 'a most remarkable pianist—and perhaps something more.' This first friendship, Dent says, 'was renewed with deeper cordiality in later life'; Delius was by three years the senior of the two.

Dent relates (*sub anno* 1888) an anecdote about Busoni and Sinding (p. 46). 'Many years afterwards,' he writes, 'Sinding, Delius, and Busoni met in Paris; they were then all three married and accompanied by their wives. Busoni, who was in a cheerful mood, burst out suddenly with one of his characteristic observations: "Here we are, three composers and their wives; and everyone of the ladies is thinking that *her* husband is the greatest of all!" Delius was a little uncomfortable; it was "the sort of thing one didn't say," he felt.' Delius is recorded by Dent as saying 'that what struck him most about Busoni in their Leipzig days was his passionately intense ambition'—an ambition which in the worldly sense Delius wholly lacked. In 1902, in Berlin, Busoni gave a series of orchestral concerts of contemporary music with programmes of positively pro-

phetic insight. The full lists of works performed can be read in Dent's biography; they included the first performance in Berlin of Delius' *Paris,* among such varied company as the German *premières* of Debussy's *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune* and Sibelius' *En Saga* conducted by the composer. The press of Berlin was very unsympathetic and critical of the enterprise, Dent writes, and adds that Delius did not like Busoni's salon of adorers, since he had to wait to gain audience with the great man; his comment was, 'How good Gerda [Frau Busoni] was to them!'

What Sir Thomas Beecham may finally tell us about his association with Delius from 1907 onwards is matter for anticipation and future enjoyment. In the meantime there is valuable material in *A Mingled Chime,* though the first and only published volume stretches towards us no farther in years than Heseltine's (1923). Chapter XIV, dated 1908, is devoted to Delius, and gives a most interesting, in many ways penetrating study of the man. The other references in the index should be followed up; but attention is here called to two points—Beecham's experiences with *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (see, in Heseltine's text, pp. 68 and 81 *et seq.*—indeed, the whole of his section II), and his remarks in Chapter XVI ('A Happy Year') on Delius' 'indifference or ineptitude' in making clear to his performers what he firmly wanted the music to sound like. Complaints of bad performances of Delius' works are found in Delius' own words and letters, in Heseltine, in Clare Delius, in Fenby, and elsewhere; but it is impossible to doubt that in some large measure this was due to the composer's notational carelessness and ineffectual markings—'it seemed,' writes Beecham, 'that having once got down on paper the mere notes of his creations, he concerned himself hardly at all with how they could be made clear of ambiguity to his interpreters.' The complete novelty of his idiom made such editorial labours, of a highly skilled order,

more necessary with this music than with unplayed works by most of his contemporaries. Both this forbidding handicap, coupled with the composer's own handwriting (pp. 55-6), and the originality of sound with its large choral and orchestral demands put grave difficulties in the way of Delius' obtaining wide recognition in an age without mechanical means of musical diffusion. On all these grounds, one is not surprised, if one is unhappy, that when Sir Henry Wood (another Delius champion) proposed *Sea-Drift* for the Sheffield Festival in 1908, he was 'turned down.' In *My Life of Music* he tells how 'the chorus did not take kindly to the work,' and how Dr. (later Sir) Henry Coward, the chorus-master, 'himself was not really in sympathy with it.' Wood characteristically wrote asking that he 'might meet the committee personally to play and sing the work to them.' I should like to have been present at that indomitably vigorous if somewhat sketchy solo performance.

I am fortunate in being permitted to print here some memories by three personal friends of the composer—Roger Quilter, Charles Kennedy Scott, and Percy Grainger—which have not been published before; their words are given below without any attempt to fit them into their order of date-reference.

Roger Quilter writes: 'I met Delius for the first time with Percy Grainger in London. These two, though so different, seemed to have a strong attraction for each other and a very real admiration of each other's musical gifts. But it was not till later that I got to know Delius personally and to come so completely under the spell of his music.

'Before Delius became ill, I happened to be staying in Frankfurt-on-the-Main for a few weeks. While there I went to hear an orchestral concert at the Opera House directed by the opera conductor, a most fine and sensitive

artist. Among other things Delius' *Brigg Fair* was given, which I had never heard. I was so overcome by the beauty both of the composition and of the performance that I could not resist writing enthusiastically to Delius, though I hardly knew him then. Delius at once replied, telling me that his *Sea-Drift* was shortly to be performed at Frankfurt, and begging me to stay to hear it. He added that he was coming himself and that he would like to see me.

'This was an opportunity not to be missed. Delius arrived and took me to the final rehearsal of his work, which went smoothly and well. He was delighted and fell into a really happy mood; I became completely charmed and fascinated by him. The performance itself at the concert was a very fine one. The work had been carefully and lovingly prepared. The translation into German of Walt Whitman's poem was beautifully done by Jelka Rosen, Delius' gifted and remarkable wife. This whole experience for me was an unforgettable one, especially as I never saw Delius again in this genial, happy mood. The dark clouds had not yet descended upon him.

'Many years later I went to see Delius at his home at Grez-sur-Loing. He was then a complete invalid and quite blind and helpless. But his personality was as strong as ever, and though I am sure it was a great effort for him, he was as charming and thoughtful as possible during my short visit. The devotion and tact of his wife were quite wonderful. Later on, when Sir Thomas Beecham gave those unforgettable concerts of Delius' compositions at Queen's Hall (in 1929), I saw something of the composer and his wife, and I sat with them in the circle. It was a terribly moving experience, watching that unseeing, highly sensitive face turned towards the orchestra, following every note, every nuance of Beecham's inspired and exquisite performance of the music. Yet I felt sure that Delius was then supremely happy.'

Mr. Roger Quilter's charming piece came to me in the form of separate notes with a covering letter. Mr. Charles Kennedy Scott's were written in the form of a letter to me. I have thought it best to suppress the personal opening and ending and to print the remainder of his admirable material about Delius. It should be added, not only in fairness to the three contributors, but as a point of critical interest, that none of them saw my words before he wrote his own, and that therefore any similarity in the critical and appreciative outlook of the three pen-holders redounds to Delius' credit and sets him in true and just perspective.

'I came to know Delius fairly well, though others can claim longer and closer intimacy. I first met him in 1912 or so when Balfour Gardiner gave his wonderful series of concerts. Just previously Norman O'Neill had introduced me to Balfour as being of possible service to him with the Oriana Madrigal Society. It was through these concerts that I (and many others far more deserving) gained a footing which we had never had before.

'Almost without one's being aware of it, a great ferment of musical activity had been taking place in our midst—great in quality as well as extent. We discovered, almost suddenly, that we had produced a veritable "school" of composers, though its elements were so diverse and individual: a school already cemented by very close personal friendships (destined to be further extended) which had arisen largely through the instrumentality of Balfour Gardiner himself.

'Balfour's concerts were probably the most important series of concerts that we have ever had, not excepting those of the Delius Festival in 1929. They consolidated English music as never before or since. At that time, though Vaughan Villiams was already a considerable figure, Parry, Stanford, and Elgar were still in the ascendant. But there were younger composers, well past the prentice stage, who

had by no means had their due—Holst, Bax, Dale, Delius, Balfour Gardiner himself, and others. Some of their music had been performed, rather by way of encouragement than as an act of faith in its merits. Good intentions of a festival committee (reflecting a sort of bourgeois complacency) or even the public largesse of the "Proms" did not properly meet the situation. A far surer estimate needed to be supplied, an estimate that could only come from a man of the rarest discrimination. Such a man was Balfour Gardiner, who further had both the means and the enthusiasm to do what was wanted.

'The result was the Balfour Gardiner Concerts of 1912 and 1913. Short lived though they were (only eight took place), they were sufficient to demonstrate a new note in our native art; an indubitably English approach freed from Continental fetters, by which perfectly sincere emotions could be expressed in an original way; a liberation not only of formal processes but, what was of far more importance, of the imagination itself. Of all this Delius' music is a chief example.

'Many of us are aware of Balfour's exceptional generosity and judgment (which, with engaging independence, has always refused to be taken in by accepted opinion of any kind). No one will ever know the full extent of his benefactions—the perfect gentleman has always been behind them. The tribute must be paid here.

'The days of these concerts were satisfying, happy days. Balfour had a small town house in Kensington, off Edwardes Square—Norman O'Neill lived opposite. There his friends gathered; there Percy Grainger would play his own compositions, or Bax, with his unrivalled power of score-reading, the compositions of other members of the circle when their own skill was insufficient; there plans were discussed, programmes settled with eager anticipation. The moving spirit was, of course, Balfour Gardiner; no accred-

ited institution could have supplied the stimulus that he gave.

'Delius came from France to hear his *Sea-Drift* and smaller works, which were sung by the Oriana—in the case of *Sea-Drift* a professionally augmented Oriana. He was in good health then; his physical affliction did not develop till later. He never had much to say about the performance of his music. He seemed content to leave it to others, provided he could trust their competence. A lack of executive ability probably accounted for this. Composition is one thing, performance quite another; and it by no means follows that a composer knows exactly what he wants, though he can quickly sense what he does not want. The most I heard Delius say was "Why will they always take my music too fast?"; for the rest, he hardly offered any comment, and, as far as I was concerned, was indulgently appreciative—I remember his coming to Leighton House one night when we were practising his part-song "On Craig Dhu"; he appeared to be very affected by what he heard. In consequence he wrote two unaccompanied, wordless songs for us, "To be sung of a summer night on the water," shortly after. I couldn't get him to see that this title was rather queer English, though it would have been perfectly all right in French.[1]

'Special sympathy is required in the performance of Delius' work. It will not give up its secret by rough and ready treatment. It is so sensitive and refined that the performer must have a like attitude, particularly as regards beauty of tone. If he is not a poet at heart, he had better leave Delius alone.

'Delius' music is above all a music of "distance," of background rather than foreground; and just as there is a dissolution of form in distance, strongly knit forms are not the characteristic of Delius' work. It is the magic of colour,

[1] See letter on page 166.

the stillness of far-off things, that entrance us; lively action, which must operate close at hand, scarcely enters.

'Delius' special concern with colour could, perhaps, be inferred by the pictures which he had about him at Grez. Most of them—many were by his wife—were of an impressionist kind—studies in colour rather than form; their strange, vivid colouring immediately caught the eye. Certainly Delius himself was a superb colourist, one of the greatest in music, whether in terms of voices or instruments. Indeed one might say that he is surpassed by no other composer for sheer beauty of sound. He never uses a crude or harsh note, or displays anything like vulgar opulence; he would have scorned "effect" unrelated to "feeling." His tones are merged and blended with the utmost richness—often the outcome of very full *divisi* writing for strings and voices; thus he secures a lively sense of "atmosphere," as necessary to the unity of music as of painting—there can hardly be greatness without it! The choral section of *The Song of the High Hills* shows these attributes at their best. Such is its rapture that we scarcely breathe as we hear it. Yet Delius constantly disregards the logic of the vocal line, preferring harmonic to linear disposition in order to secure his purpose—a sure sign of his concern with background. The melody is there, but he will often begin it in one voice and end it in another, tossing it about just as it suits him, rather to the discomfort of the singers. The total effect is supremely beautiful, but it is erratic, and (as someone has said) "ruthless" in arrangement.

'And as his music is of such high breeding, so, as far as I knew him, was the man himself. There was nothing of the "hail fellow, well met," nothing effusive about him. Entirely self-possessed, he never raised his voice—his speech was normally as mellow as his music. It had no corrosive quality, even when he made the most biting observations. His look was slightly disdainful, yet it was also kindly and

serene—the mouth showed that; the eyes were not piercing, they reflected an inward rather than an outward gaze, as though he could not be much bothered with external things. It was the face of a dreamer, softened by a sort of Wordsworthian contact with Nature. Cynicism is the salt of life—Delius had plenty of it; but it was expressed in such a way, with such gentleness of tone and temper, that it never really hurt, or hardened into an unwelcome aspect.

'Fenby talks of Delius' "sternness" during the closing years. I never saw anything of this, and am inclined to think than any forbidding traits of character came more from ill-health than ill-nature. But there is no doubt that he had a mind of unusual independence and an adamantine will, however much it was camouflaged by charm of manner.

'He was certainly not pliant. He had his own views and they seldom coincided with those of the multitude. Once, at Grez, when we were returning from a walk to Fontainebleau, we passed a cellar in which a very old cobbler was at work. I had been advocating "hygiene," upon which such store is laid in modern life. Delius was sarcastic; he would have none of it. "Look at that cobbler," he said; "he has been working in that cellar for 50 years and the window has never been opened."

'Next door to Delius' house was a sort of shed in which any tramp found wandering about the village at night was locked up by the *Garde Champêtre* (or local policeman); there was straw, for sleeping, on the floor, and the inmate accepted his temporary fate quite naturally. Having wished him goodnight, the *Garde Champêtre* turned the key, and in the morning released his man so that he could continue his daily prowl. This struck me as an amusing custom, and though not immediately concerned with Delius, shows the old-fashioned place in which he lived.

'Delius took nothing for granted. He was the rebel

throughout, refusing to acknowledge anything save the law of his own being; hence his originality, hence too, perhaps, certain artistic weaknesses and exaggerated pronouncements. He did not care whether others agreed with him; he was not out to proselytize; he only wished to be let alone; he was the anarchist *pur sang,* though he would never have formulated a theory about that or anything else. He scorned insincerity and was frank to an almost painful degree: at any rate, with Delius, you knew how you and others stood. It was a measure, as well, of his nobility as an artist. There were no extraneous 'oughts' in his make-up. If an inner compulsion did not operate, all was dust and ashes in accordance with St. Paul's discourse upon charity, though the two men probably failed to recognize each other in Heaven.

'It goes without saying that Delius had no religious beliefs in the conventional sense. He wished to be buried without any of the usual rites; and this was carried out. He was just "laid in earth" without a word of committal or farewell—carted to the cemetery and dumped; a pathetic and to the few onlookers distressingly inadequate conclusion.

'Delius could abide by nothing "common or mean." He was essentially aristocratic in disposition, with a tendency to "dwell apart," though he was by no means a recluse. He liked chosen friends, but I do not think he sought them; rather, they came to him. The pleasures of life appealed to him; he was no ascetic. A bottle of first-rate wine was always forthcoming from his cellar at Grez; he, as well as the rest of us, delighted in savouring its quality. Indeed it was always quality with him—the fastidious appreciation of a few things, not the number of his possessions.

'I went to Grez two or three times; Balfour Gardiner also took me to Cassel when Delius was there for an attempted cure towards the end of his life. Lightly built

at his best, by that time he was so emaciated that I used to carry him in my arms from his bedroom to the dining-room of the hotel. Even then he enjoyed his food, and there was plenty of life in his talk—pungent observations were always forthcoming. He seemed able to triumph over his blindness and other pathetic disabilities as long as it was humanly possible. I never heard him complain.

'It was good to be at Grez: I recall the old stone-built house, with its latticed shutters; the garden at the back leading to the river, beyond which were to be seen the tall sugar-loaf heaps of white sand, used for making the finest china; and in a corner—perhaps the most delightful feature of all—the fairy grotto (or so it seemed) which supplied water for the house from an ever-running spring. It's damp, rocky walls, lined with moss and fern, were of the deepest brown. Scarcely any light penetrated; the falling water, though but a trickle, made quite a noise, because of the way in which its sound was confined. Yet it was all so quiet, "far from the madding crowd," just where Delius would live. His wife Jelka's laughter and the song of the birds in the garden were all that disturbed the silence. Everyone knows of Jelka's devotion.

'A considerable artist by the time I knew her, she had already almost given up her painting in order to attend to Delius. But it had not soured her, the laughter was always there. Jelka was exuberant, Delius the reverse . . . She was of Danish extraction, usually conversed in French, but spoke English in a quaint way which often hit off a situation to perfection. Once when the publishers had printed the voice parts of *The Song of the High Hills* in a very unpractical form she said she was going to write a "thunder letter" to them about it. (Delius often suffered from this sort of presentation in print, and it made the performance of his work unnecessarily difficult.) At another time, as we passed a house which was being built, she

explained that it was to be the home of an "ambitious apothecary."

'Sometimes at Grez we would play Delius' works, though he never forced them upon us. He listened generally without making any comment. Once he said that the bass would be better played louder, but I remember no other criticisms either as regards tempo or nuance. Percy Grainger had made a four-handed arrangement of *The Song of the High Hills,* and we played this to Delius. I also accompanied Delius' sister in many of the songs, including the one I liked best, "Hy-Brazil."

'My favourite choral work is *Sea-Drift*; the *Requiem* never attracted me very much. I have already spoken about *The Song of the High Hills,* which seems to me to be much more than an impression, evoking rather (as its title suggests) the very voice of the hills themselves. It fell to the Philharmonic Choir and the Oriana to perform all Delius' compositions, some of them for the first time.

'I have said how self-possessed in manner Delius was; as an artist he was also entirely self-contained. By that, I mean that he felt no obligation towards society; he was not in the least inspired by that fruitful cause of artistic deception, the public good. With him it was as nearly as possible "art for art's sake." Of course, art must always be about something, though its subject-matter suffers such a sea-change at the artist's hands that even the most ordinary (and even ugly) appearance can be transformed thereby into a pearl of the rarest price. In short Delius had little or no social sense; his gift to the world did not depend upon that. He went direct to the point; the expression, generally, of what he felt in the presence of nature or some emotional situation. What became of the result, what influence it had, was of little importance to him.

'Delius had his own conventions, even if he discarded the conventions of others. A bar of Delius could be none

other than himself. But how beautiful his style is; how suited to lyrical utterance! His music always "sings" in ceaseless flow; scarcely a note is separated off from its neighbours, or used merely to give rhythmic emphasis. He compels by a sweet reasonableness that penetrates the very centre of experience, not by his power. There are of course loud passages in Delius; but they are, usually, relatively slow in movement, weak in driving energy. The vigour seems assumed rather than innate as though the composer could not keep it up. The loud choruses of the *Mass of Life,* for instance, are not really forceful; their muscular system is not designed to support any weight of sound or continued physical strain. But what compensations there are in the softer, slower passages, as in the lovely instrumental interlude of the same work!

'There is no need to hail Delius as the one and only saviour of music; there are many saviours in life and art, and we do well, without shame for our eclecticism, to give thanks for them all. Personally I find that my own nature (such as it is) is fulfilled in music regardless of its time and place. And why not? The spirit of all the past runs through our being; we are of the past infinitely more than of the present or future. Be this as it may, I can take Delius to my heart and find the superb beauty which he revealed an addition to, and not at all to the detriment of, composers of centuries before.

'There is no such thing as a "period piece," except chronologically. A work of art is either satisfying or it is not. "Period pieces" are only purchased, not valued. Though he is of our time we cannot label Delius as belonging to it. It is by an eternal quality that his music gains its greatness.'

* * * * * *

With his personal letter about Delius, Mr. Charles Ken-

nedy Scott enclosed eight letters from the composer to himself. They add to the picture, for they illuminate the artist's mind and the man's kindliness. I print them, by permission, unedited, save for one added explanation in a footnote; they have never been printed before.

Grez-sur-Loing,
Seine-et-Marne,
8th August, 1917.

Dear Mr. Scott,

Many thanks for your letter enclosing the one from Mr. Rogers.[1] What would you propose as the title? 'To be sung on Summer night on the Water'? or what? Why is 'of' bad? I think the first one ought to be sung on 'Ah!' or any vowel which will produce the richest tone. No. 2 likewise, but the tenor solo must no doubt sing on 'La'. I leave it to you, knowing your great experience in these matters and wonderful results. How can one control the number of copies printed? My experience has shown me that publishers print more copies than they account for. At least in Germany! I had a law suit for 2 years on this account which I eventually won. Since then I sold my works outright. Of course this is a little matter and of no great importance, but I have a number of new works completed since the war began which I wish to publish in England, and perhaps with Mr. Rogers if we can come to a satisfactory agreement. I have a *Requiem* (something for you), a Double Concerto for Violin and Violoncello and Orchestra, a Violin Concerto, a new *Dance Rhapsody* for Orchestra, a 'Cello Sonata,

[1] Mr. Winthrop Rogers, an American by birth, who was at this time actively interested in publishing the younger English composers in London, especially their songs.

a String Quartet—you see I have not been idle. I don't believe in Novello's; they are stick-in-the-mud and have old-fashioned methods. I hope to come to London early next year and shall see what can be done. I have written to Mr. Rogers.

With kindest regards,

I remain,

Sincerely yours,

FREDERICK DELIUS.

Delius dictates:—

Schlosshotel,
Wilhelmshöhe,
Cassel,
30.3.1925

Dear Scott,

I have postponed writing to you hoping against hope that I would be able to come to the London performance of the *Mass of Life*. But my condition is so feeble that I simply dare not undertake the journey. How I have been looking forward to the performance with your beautiful choir!

It is a terrible disapppointment to me, and if I live through all this perhaps it will be repeated next season and I could hear it—that is, if it pleases. I must hear the *Mass of Life* with your choir before I die.

With affectionate greetings,

Yours ever,

FREDERICK DELIUS.

Wiesbaden,
Villa ' Mon Repos,'
Frankfürter Strasse.

My Dear Kennedy Scott,

I have been here at Wiesbaden for the last month undergoing a very severe treatment. My legs had suddenly gone very weak and for the present I am forbidden to use them and am being wheeled about in a bath chair. I shall therefore be unable to come to London for the performance of the *Requiem*. You will understand *how disappointed* I am. Please write and let me know how it went off.

Thanking you most heartily for all the trouble I am sure you will have had with the work,

I remain,

Very sincerely yours,

FREDERICK DELIUS.

Delius dictates :—

Grez-sur-Loing,
21.5.1928

My dear Charles,

I thank you from my heart for all the love and care you have given to my work. When your beautiful letter written after the first big rehearsal came, I realized so fully with what devotion and what deep understanding you studied my works and brought their performance about in the face of all those great material difficulties too! Judging from the enthusiastic letters I have received, the performance must have been excellent, or it could not have made such a deep impression. I thank you from the bottom of my heart, dear Charles, and I am grieved indeed that I could not hear it. I do so long once to hear this work again and sung by your wonderful chorus!

Do come and see us soon, perhaps on one of your motoring trips with your wife.

We shall be delighted to have you both. With much love from Jelka,

I am, always yours,

affectionately,

FREDERICK DELIUS.

Grez-sur-Loing (S-et-M),

31.5.1928.

Dear Charles,

I thank you so much for your letter and the criticisms. I hope you know what I think of music critics. It is only *now* they begin to see there is anything in my music at all. The enthusiastic letters I received from England from all different quarters have convinced me that the performance must have been wonderfully good. And I have more faith in the music-lover than in the music critic. Every one of my works has at one time been damned by the London critics—from *Sea-Drift* to the *Mass*. I am just longing to hear the *Mass* again, and if you repeat it next year I will come, even if I end up in an urn at Golders Green.

Stick to your conducting. Don't let either friend or foe dishearten you. You will see that one day every one will see what a good conductor you are. For where there is such great and understanding love for a thing, there are also the necessary qualities.

Do come and visit us here if you can possibly do it this summer. We should so love it!

With all affectionate messages from Jelka,

Ever your friend,

FREDERICK DELIUS.

Langham Hotel,
Portland Place,
London, W.1.
5.11.1929

My dear Charles,

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed the singing of your splendid Philharmonic Choir. It is a really and truly great achievement to have trained them as you have. I have never heard my works sung so subtly and with such fine nuance.

Thank you for all the trouble you have taken!

Yours ever affectionately,

FREDERICK DELIUS.

Langham Hotel,
Portland Place,
London, W.1.
5.11.1929.

Dear Philharmonic Choir,

Let me thank you again for your really magnificent singing of the *Mass of Life*. It was a great joy to me to hear my work so beautifully performed.

Yours sincerely,

FREDERICK DELIUS.

* * * * * *

Percy Grainger adopted the plan of writing me a short formal memoir; I print it exactly as I received it.

ABOUT DELIUS

by Percy Aldridge Grainger

Although Delius did not have a drop of English blood in him, he epitomized for me the English gentleman-of-leisure,

his birth and up-growing in Yorkshire having so completely anglicized him. I do not know a note of his music, I do not recall an incident in his life (as it was known to me personally), that is not somehow rooted in a preoccupation with pleasure. His life knew no obligations, no irresistible urges, no onerous devotions. He floated on the top of life, a rich man's son, able to indulge his every whim and with no religious or moral scruples to limit his pursuit of pleasure. In place of the more enslaving feelings and instincts (that bind most men to the wheel of life) Delius responded to a myriad of interests that kept him amused but left him free. A vast range of subjects constantly engaged his mind, each subject tolerantly viewed from his vantage point of utter leisure. His approach to life—to the different continents, races, and cultures—was not only leisured but positively touristic. His absorbing interest in the Negro (as instanced in *Florida, Koanga,* and *Appalachia*) was purely that of an onlooker—a highly sympathetic onlooker, but merely an onlooker none the less. The same detachment (that of a rich man able to relish to the full what the world subserviently had to offer him in the way of entertainment) characterized his fondness for Scandinavia, as revealed in his songs to Jens Peter Jacobsen's (Danish) poems and in *Eventyr, Fennimore and Gerda, The Song of the High Hills,* etc. I once asked Delius whether his *Song of the High Hills* purported to be the high hills 'singing about themselves' or whether the music tallied the impressions of a man under the spell of Alpine scenery. His reply was expectable: 'The impressions of a man walking through the hills.' The touristic quality of his *Paris* is obvious.

This Marcus Aurelius of music was indeed the musical aristocrat of his era. He did not so much create new ideas and idioms as respond exquisitely to those brought to him by others. He was a man of taste culling the honey gathered for him by worker-bees, himself no worker-bee. Delius was

not the kind of man ever to collect folk songs 'in the field.' He would not even appreciate a folk song unless it came to him already harmonized. Thus he fell in love with my setting of *Brigg Fair* and at once asked my permission to use the tune in a more spun-out form. This was typical. We are told that Jelka would select a text for him that she thought would inspire his muse (such as the text of *Songs of Sunset*) and leave it on his desk. Delius would find it lying there, would respond exquisitely to it, and without a word passing between him and Jelka would start to compose to it.

My own experience with Delius follows a similar course. Around 1910 he had complained to me that his orchestral works were neglected in England. I wrote him saying that England was studded with fine amateur orchestras that would rejoice to do Delius works, but lacked the 3rd clarinet, 3rd bassoon, and 5th and 6th horns that his scores so often called for. 'Write some short pieces for small orchestra,' I urged, 'and English orchestras will devour them.' His next letter told that he had taken my advice, had already finished a short piece for small orchestra (based on a Norwegian melody) entitled *On hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring,* and was at work on a second one, *Summer Night on the River.* His receptive, rather than originative, attitude was manifest again in his choice of the Norwegian folk song around which *On hearing the First Cuckoo* was woven. He did not take a folk song that he himself had collected in Jotunheim (Norwegian Alps), but one already bewitchingly harmonized by Grieg in his *Norwegian Folk Songs,* opus 66—which volume I had played to Delius when I first met him in 1907. In similar receptive (rather than originative) vein did Delius conceive his transcendental *Song of the High Hills*; for all his 17 mountaineering trips to Norway it did not occur to him to write a work about the hills until he had heard my two *Hill-Songs,* the

first written 1901-1902, the second 1901-1907. *The Song of the High Hills* was written around 1912.

There is no criticism implied in my calling Delius a receptive and derivative, rather than an originative and creative, composer. Some geniuses (Guillaume de Machaut, William Lawes, Schumann, Grieg, César Franck, Debussy) are born to be innovators, while other, equally great geniuses (Guillaume Dufay, Bach, Wagner, Gabriel Fauré, Ravel) are cut out to be perfectors, culminators. (As when Wagner played to Liszt a passage in his *Ring* that was strongly reminiscent of a theme of Liszt's, and Liszt remarked, 'I am thankful to see it immortalized.')

It is light-shedding to compare with each other these two transcendental feats of emotional harmonization of the same time ('In Ola Valley'): Grieg's in his opus 66 and Delius' in the *First Cuckoo*. Both are uneclipsably lovely, resourceful, touching, sensitive. But while Grieg's is concentrated, pristine, miniature, and drastic, Delius' has the opulent richness of an almost over-ripe fruit and the luxurious long decline of a sunset.

Indeed, much of Delius' music has the quality of sunsets and sunrises. When asked why so many of his compositions 'faded out,' rather than closing with some more definite ending, Delius would answer, 'Most things in nature happen gradually, not abruptly.' He wanted his musical forms to tally the processes of organic change so prevalent in nature as we see it.

And the larger part of Delius' music has the wistfulness of a sunset. This, again, was part of his aristocratic detachment, his touristically coloured emotionalism, his nostalgia of a rich man's leisured son. For Delius, like all hedonists, was lonely in his pursuit of pleasure. Meaning was not lent to his life by kin or children, or by allegiance to 'isms, beliefs, movements, or causes. He saw the infinite sadness of life without the slightest participation in those intoxicating

enthusiasms that lead to life's catastrophes. When in his *Pagan Requiem* he mourned all the young men killed in the wars, he did so without sensing, behind the wars, any pardonable necessity. At the same time his freedom from religious belief, moral convictions, and nationalistic frenzies left him singularly un-tragic, even in his laments. His sadness—even at the deaths of the young men lost in the wars—was always mild. 'Sad, but not crushed by sadness.'

With such aristocratic detachment as was his, it is not surprising that Delius was somewhat mischievous in his non-creative, non-nostalgic moments. Of Sir Hubert Parry he is reported to have said to Elgar: 'It is a good thing Parry died when he did; otherwise he might have set the whole Bible to music.' To me Delius told of seeing, at Havre, during the first German war, an under-sized Cockney soldier chatting with a gigantic Sikh. Turning to Delius, the Cockney said: 'I tell you, them chaps is proud to talk to the likes of us.' Hearing that a certain musician who was visiting him at Grez was an ardent Christian Scientist (a fact that the musician had not mentioned to him, however), Delius regaled his guest with 'Of all the stupid things in the world, Christian Science is the stupidest.' And he went on by the hour teasing the man. But had the man admitted his belief and stuck up for it, Delius would have listened to him quite tolerantly, and a jolly and graceful discussion might have ensued. For Delius was never afraid of argument, nor impatient in it. Nor was he thin-skinned. In my own case, knowing I was a vegetarian and a teetotaller, he would ask me at meal-times what I was eating and drinking. When I replied, 'Bread and milk and a glass of water' (or the like), he would lay into me with 'Why be such a kill-joy? Why don't you enjoy a nice big steak and a mug of beer?' If I retorted, 'Yes, and be blind and paralyzed like you at the age of 70,' he would merely chuckle.

On the occasion of his 60th birthday, a dinner in his honour was given in Frankfurt-on-Maine, where he and Jelka were then (1923) living for a while, and among the speeches made was one by a German poet that cruised around the thought 'Into our midst has come one of the rich ones of this world—rich in feelings, rich in genius, rich in experience, and a member of a rich nation.' In replying Delius did not waste much time in politeness and euphemisms, but passed quickly into a dissertation on the witlessness of the various European countries. First he enlarged on the mistakes of the Allies, bringing smiles of satisfaction to the faces of his German listeners, who were beginning to comfort themselves with the thought 'At last a foreigner who sympathizes with us.' But these smiles vanished when Delius added, 'But the Germans have been the stupidest of them all.'

A side of Delius that seems to me to be too seldom mentioned was his touching devotion to his childhood memories of Yorkshire. He was never tired of praising the kindliness of the mill-hands in his father's mills in Bradford, and his unwaning love for the scenery of the Yorkshire moors is nobly witnessed in his *North-Country Sketches*—a masterwork still too rarely heard.

Delius' innate tolerance and passiveness were shown in countless little ways. During the earlier years of his paralysis and blindness he was nursed by a succession of German male nurses who came to tend him as part of their duties as members of a religious brotherhood. A ministration by one of these 'Brothers' that Delius especially appreciated was the reading aloud of stories by Edgar Wallace. In these reading-aloud sessions the author's name was invariably pronounced 'Vall-lah-kay,' and the names of the characters in the stories were equally translated into the unrecognizable. But it never occurred to Delius to correct the Brother's pronunciation.

Delius' unruffled courage was evidenced not only in the stoical (one might almost say 'unfeeling') way he accepted the collapse of his own health—so robust in earlier years—but also in many small and unforeseeable incidents of his daily life. One day, during his complete blindness and helplessness, a group of us had him seated in a chair in the middle of his boat while we rowed him about on the river Loing. The oar of a passing sculler grazed his chest. In the mildest, most unmoved voice Delius asked 'What was that?'

Delius' typically English irresponsibility was shown in a thousand ways, but never more amusingly than when interrogated about details in his scores by his unfailing benefactor and friend, H. Balfour Gardiner, when the latter was correcting proofs of reprints of Delius' orchestral works. Gardiner kept asking about a kettle-drum passage in *The Song of the High Hills* in which the kettle-drummer, with only 4 drums, was required to play 5 different notes and with no time to tune between them. Gardiner insisted that the passage, as printed, could not be played. But all he could get out of Delius was: 'I don't know how he plays them; I only know he *does* play them.' Gardiner was disconsolate: 'The trouble is that the drummer does *not* play the 5th note, but Fred never notices it.'

I have dwelt at some length upon the more negative side of Delius' nature—upon his indifference, detachment, irresponsibility, and mischievousness. But I must not fail to mention his positive and humane qualities. In some ways he was the kindest and most protective man I have ever met. When in 1923, after a great tragedy in my life, I confided to Delius that I was not sure that I would have the courage to return to my life in America, Delius said, quick as a shot: 'My dear lad, you can always find employment here with me. You can be my amanuensis, or my gardener, or my chauffeur, or anything you like.'

No colleague ever did so much for my music as Delius did. When he and I first met first met in 1907, I had never heard a work of mine performed except some small choruses at the most rural of Competition Festivals—in spite of the fact that my chief works had long been composed (my main compositional activity lying between the ages of 16 and 20). This condition of being unperformed was of my own choosing. Both my parents were invalids and my first interest in life was to be able to provide for them and their comfort. This I was doing by means of my pianistic career, which I feared would be upset if my compositions (with their irregular rhythms, endless chains of unresolved dischords, and monotonous form-lengths—things then unheard of) were performed and aroused great opposition. This argument left Delius unmoved. After seeing my *Hill-songs* I and II, *English Dance,* 'Marching Song of Democracy, 'Green Bushes,' *Father and Daughter,* etc., he insisted that my first duty was to put my innovations to the acid test of performance. 'You are the only one who can judge whether they sound as you want them to or not. And you can only tell after you have them performed.' So when Elgar, in 1908 or 1909, asked Delius to join him in forming a 'League of British Music' Delius' only stipulation was that representative works of mine should be given at the first Festival of the League. That is how my 'Irish Tune from County Derry' and 'Brigg Fair' came to be sung at the Liverpool Festival of 1909.

In 1923—although his health was then fast failing—Delius arranged to have two of my most important and least saleable works published in Vienna. And in the same year he attended all the 6 orchestral rehearsals of *Hill-Song* I, 'Marching Song of Democracy,' and *The Warriors* that I held in Frankfurt-on-Maine, although he had to be taken from his house to the rehearsal hall in a wheeled chair and carried up and down stairs at the latter place. Composer

never had truer colleague than I had in Frederick Delius, and when he died I felt that my music had lost its best friend.

Our artistic comradeship was based not merely upon the great similarity of certain elements in our music (when I first saw *Appalachia* in 1907, I thought Delius' and my harmonic idiom well-nigh identical), but equally upon like-mindedness in other fields. Our outlook on life was very similar, our artistic tastes met at many points. Both of us considered the Icelandic sagas the pinnacle of narrative prose. Both of us knew the Scandinavian languages and admired the culture of Scandinavia as the flower of Europeanism. Both of us worshipped Walt Whitman, Wagner, Grieg, and Jens Peter Jacobsen. Both of us detested the music of the Haydn-Mozart-Beethoven period. 'If a man tells me he likes Mozart, I know in advance that he is a bad musician,' Delius was fond of saying.

During the years 1923-1927—when Delius' health was failing so rapidly and before he enjoyed the boon of Eric Fenby's saintly presence at Grez-sur-Loing—Balfour Gardiner and I used to travel yearly to Grez in order to play to Delius on two pianos. Our offerings consisted mainly of arrangements of Delius' works: the first *Dance Rhapsody, The Song of the High Hills, On hearing the first cuckoo in Spring, Summer Night on the River, Brigg Fair,* the 'Cello Sonata, the 'Cello Concerto, etc.

Outside his own music Delius was not easy to cater to musically, for he indulged himself in a good deal of enfant-terrible-ism in his artistic attitudes and excelled in altering his taste from one year to another. One year he would ask for Bach; the next year he would say, 'You know, Bach always bores me.' But Chopin and Grieg he never turned against. He preferred Ravel to Debussy. He had no patience with Richard Strauss, Mahler, or Hindemith. He scoffed at 'the wrong-note craze.' He cared everything for

the final artistic product and nothing for those efforts that aim at building new tonal media for the future. Thus he took no interest in my 'large chamber music,' in which I endeavoured to achieve with larger groups of single instruments a tonal balance more delicate than that natural to the symphony orchestra, with its top-heavy and ill-balanced sonorities. 'Why do you bother with experimental forms of orchestration?' he would say to me, 'I find the conventional orchestra does everything I want it to.' And so it did, in his case.

To my ears it seems that in Delius' music the most tender and subtle feelings of modern life are voiced in the most poignant and soul-reaching tonal speech. As Bach and Wagner did in their time, so Delius in his time seems to have succeeded in gathering together all that is of celestial beauty in the tonal idiom of his generation, and to have succeeded equally in divesting his muse of all that is pedantic, ugly, dry, and mechanical. And I feel that the loftiness and spirituality of his music rise directly out of the beauty of his inner being—out of his freedom from ambition, ignoble eagerness, and other forms of worldliness; out of his passiveness, tolerance, compassionateness, and tenderness; out of the inborn gaiety and gracefulness of his aristocratic nature.

As a result of Delius' being widely seen in public and memorably photographed in the last years of his life, when he was such a frail invalid, and as a result of Delius-worshippers' in their writings having emphasized the last and painful phases of his illness, it seems that a needlessly mournful and gloomy Delius-legend has been allowed to grow up, a legend not necessarily false to his condition at the close of his life perhaps, but certainly very misleading as an interpretation of his complete personality during the main part of his life, including the period in which he produced his greatest masterpieces—from 1890 to 1922.

I did not see Delius during the last year-and-a-half of his life, being in Australia at that time. But from 1907 to 1932 I was continually in touch with him, both by means of personal contact and by letters. And in all that time I noticed nothing of the grimness and sternness that some saw in him. Delius, as I knew him, was remarkable for his gracious and graceful companionship, for the gaiety and lightness of his moods, for his good-humoured delight in fair and open-minded argument, for his unfailingly humane outlook on world affairs and his flair for foreseeing future events and conditions, for his complete cosmopolitanism ('I am a good European,' was his frequent quotation), for his light-shedding anecdotes, for his perfect at-one-ness with Jelka (to see them sitting together, listening to his music, was to be present at a sort of sacrament), for his wish to see all people free and happy ('do what you want' was his constant advice to one and all), for his helpfulness to those he admired, and (as already dwelt upon) for his frank pursuit of pleasure. To be with Delius was to feel oneself participating in a constant ritual celebrating enjoyment. In spite of this, one had a feeling that the depths of his nature—the nostalgic and compassionate sides—were being hidden away, in ordinary daily intercourse. For the central core of his soul—his perception of the infinite sadness of life—one had to turn to his music.

PERCY ALDRIDGE GRAINGER,
At sea, June 23-25, 1950.

'The war,' writes Clare Delius, 'came to Fred, as to most artists, as a profound shock. While appreciating the spirit of personal self-sacrifice that it engendered, he refused to regard it as otherwise than a form of madness which had swept over the civilized world, destroying everything that was beautiful.' From a loving sister's point of view, those sentences give a fair notion of Grez and Delius in 1914;

but from the later historian's angle, that point of view may seem a little distorted towards the favourable side, like experimental lenses at the oculist's which make one instantly see clearer with one eye but will not balance, in true proportion, with the other incorrect stereoscopic vision. Fifteen years of personal domination within his walls had made Delius oblivious of outside movements of possessive magnitude. The kingdom of the mind—doubtless that is an admirable policy for an introvert who seeks no more than a personal retreat for contemplation. This other mind imposed itself extrovertly upon those around him, upon the house itself; the kingdom was there, unassailable (so its creator thought), but it was filled with adjuncts to the mind, with the body and accessories thereto. The German invasion of France—no doubt a distressing international disaster—affected him as an attempt to dominate his own kingdom. His philosophy was a self-centred Nietzchism; it did not extend Nietzche's doctrines to world affairs. Historically, even civically, his mind was obscured within its own confines. War was a nuisance that he must escape from. Amidst a cosmic madness, he thought himself the prime upholder of sanity.

He fled with his precious Gauguin picture (52);[1] he buried and covered over his precious wine-cellar and silver beyond the prying eyes of enemy invaders (should they come) and even occupying French officers. The enemy did not come near his house; the French officers made rack and ruin of its contents. Yet Norman O'Neill tells us that by 1916 it was 'so peaceful and jolly here at Grez.' Clare Delius relates a picturesque story of this early war period.

Heseltine does not appear to have preserved more than a few of Delius' letters during this war period, if we may judge by Cecil Gray's biography. Henry Wood tells in his memoirs how 'early in 1915 Delius came to see me in the

[1] Now, I understand, in the Courtauld Institute.

depths of depression. He told me he was very unhappy in France, and intended coming to England—at least for a time.' Wood offered him, we read, 'the loan of my London house.' He came and stayed one month. Beecham records how he lent the refugee Jelka and Frederick 'a house a few miles out of Watford,' where (it was thought) 'a hunted composer could repair his ravaged nervous system and continue his work in peace.' Even here, it was needful for peace of mind to bring over their own French cook from Grez. To enable us to appreciate her view of Frederick's attitude towards war in general, and the Kaiser's war in particular, Clare Delius quotes the 'Explanation' that stands before her brother's *Pagan Requiem* (107-110). I will not quote it again here.

The facts of the later years can be told in all too short a space; the inner history, the implications, can be read elsewhere. From Norman O'Neill we learn that it was in 1922 that the gripping illness 'seriously declared itself'; thence onward 'the endless search for health continued.' Clare Delius reports a visit to Grez in 1924; 'I noticed a very great change in my brother. The dread malady, which was to rob him of so many of his physical powers, was already creeping upon him like a shadow.' She writes of physical 'listlessness and inertia,' and notes her amazement at his wife's taking down his music from dictation. In 1926, on another visit, she found with great shock to herself that 'he was completely changed from the man I had seen two years before. Except for the dreadful paralysis . . . his mind was just as alert, his interest and sympathies just as strong, and he showed all the old satisfaction in making himself as charming to me as only Fred could be when he wanted.' But externally 'he had become very like James Gunn's picture of him.' It was during this visit that 'Fred complained of a faint mistiness before his eyes, which made it difficult for him to see clearly objects even close at hand.

That was the first time we knew that he was fated to go blind.' In the summer of 1928, the young and then unknown Yorkshire musician, Eric Fenby, offered his services to Delius as musical amanuensis, arriving at Grez in October of that year. His detailed record of his five years there is unsurpassable. It can be quoted (and has been here) on particular points: only in its completeness is its inestimable value to be appreciated. Fenby paints a wonderful picture of the man and the composer, of the surroundings of his mind that his mind itself had created, of Jelka, of the illness, of the patient's unbreakable spirit, of all these things, indeed, that are integral to our understanding of Delius. But even more important, in Fenby's pages, as in Heseltine's, is treasured a rich mine of the great man's own words, his wisdom, his limitations, that show his personality more clearly than Fenby's most revealing descriptions. As a sourcebook no less than as an authentic record of the last years, Fenby's pages can never be supplanted; their continual reference to personal detail is at once fascinating and true.

During these years of physical enchainment, Delius had many things to occupy his mind. To begin with, a number of friends visited him—we may at random mention the names of Beatrice and May Harrison, Lionel Tertis, Evlyn Howard-Jones, Balfour Gardiner, apart from those whose visits have been recorded here or elsewhere, like Thomas Beecham, Philip Heseltine, Roger Quilter, Norman O'Neill, and Charles Kennedy Scott. Edward Elgar's visit is vigorously described by Fenby, and so is that of Percy Grainger, who is reported by Clare Delius as saying to a friend and correspondent of hers, in the course of a voyage to Australia, 'You need never feel the least bit sorry for him (Delius). He is so full of fun and possesses such a happy nature that sympathy on him would be really wasted. He is always joking with the people around him.' It was the superlatively vital and optimistic Grainger who framed

those words; they add convincing testimony to another important facet of the sick man's nature—that of the conversationalist with an avid love of discussion, however one-sided. Delius must always have been a fascinating talker.

Then, he dictated no less than seven works to Fenby (apart from the reconstitution of *Idyll, A Song of Summer, Fantastic Dance,* the *Irmelin* prelude, *Caprice and Elegy* for 'cello and orchestra, the Third Violin and Piano Sonata, *Songs of Farewell,* and *Cynara*). The system of notating these works from dictation is minutely described by Fenby in a separate chapter; there is an additional interest in it for those others who have acted as 'writers' for other blind men, of less eminence but equal persistence. Professor Hutchings rightly praises the speed at which this intricate and laborious work was carried out. Delius would also listen to music, mostly that reproduced on the wireless or on gramophone records; in this pastime Delius' enjoyment was restricted by his own increasingly limited tastes in music—of Grainger it is recorded by Clare Delius that 'when he proposed to play (Bach) to Fred, my brother turned on him, exclaiming, "No, don't play Bach. You know I don't like him at all." As a corollary to this anecdote,' continues his sister, 'I remember him giving me a great lecture, declaring I had no musical appreciation when I stated rashly that I did not like Bach.' What Delius particularly enjoyed was listening to gramophone and other performances of his own music. In literature, he seems to have been equally whimsical in the choice of the books read aloud to him in his blindness.

Three major happenings came from the world outside to illumine this last phase. The first was the awarding by the Crown of the Companionship of Honour in January, 1929. Even to Delius, who had spurned public recognition and 'meetings in the market-place' all his life, with cynical —dare one think, slightly jealous?—superiority, this rare

distinction gave great pleasure. The second was the Delius Festival, planned by Sir Thomas Beecham in the same year (October 12 to November 1, 1929); six concerts designed to give a wide and representative survey of Delius' music.[1] There was grave doubt whether the composer could travel to London to be present in person. But the almost insuperable difficulties were swept away by the persistence and diligence of Beecham and Jelka and other helping friends. One can but faintly imagine what the emotional effect on such a nature—so remote, so long neglected as a composer—must have been. In his touching speech in public (quoted in full by Clare Delius) he said 'This Festival has been the time of my life'; apart from all else, one may here remember that for years the composer had been unable to go to hear an orchestra playing, in the flesh, sounds conceived not for reproduction by a machine but for ears actively present in a concert hall. At this time the University of Oxford offered the composer an Honorary Doctorate of Music; it is however a statute of the University that such degrees must be conferred in person, and owing to his health, Delius was unable to undertake the journey and so was obliged to refuse the honour. The third event was the suitable but belated action of the City of Bradford in conferring on their fellow-citizen the distinction of Honorary Freedom of the city. 'Up to 1932,' writes Clare Delius, who gives a full and vital account of the whole incident, 'only ten men had been so honoured, and of those ten only three were then alive'—one an octogenarian, another a nonagenarian, and not one of them a musician. Delius seems to have enjoyed this honour with greater relish than any he ever received; his early love for the countryside of Yorkshire had not abated in his imagination, and we may imagine with what excitement and anticipation he thought

[1] See H. C. Colles' *Essays and Lectures* (Oxford), for a reprint of his article in *The Times* of November 2, 1929.

of the visit to Grez of the Lord Mayor and Town Clerk in person to bestow the award and receive the recipient's signature on the nominal roll of honour.

Delius died on June 10, 1934; his wife had been ill, but had returned from hospital before the end. He was buried without religious ceremony, but his body was later transferred to England and was buried in Limpsfield Churchyard, Surrey, on June 10, 1935. A few days after this event, Jelka also died, and was buried in the same country grave. We may without irreverence think it fitting that so long and close and devoted a companionship should come to an end without any prolonging of loneliness.

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Philip Heseltine's critical conspectus (pp. 72-136) is frankly selective. He sought one aim, those many years ago —the aim of expounding Delius and his music; and, these many years after, we can accept his exposition as keen-sighted, almost superhumanly sensitive, and projective. For (I permit myself the remark) in 1922-3 Heseltine already had the important creations of Delius visible to his eyes if not audible to his ears. Not one work of the ensuing eleven years can, in this writer's view, assume the importance in musical history that he, with the young Heseltine, considers that the great works of the florescent period assume by natural right of spontaneous generation.

To alter, at this date, Heseltine's words of critical assessment would be unthinkable. An occasional factual comment may be allowed. And there are odd omissions or neglects, some deliberate but most of them caused by the incidence of time. These little rifts I have tried to repair in my few ensuing words. But it would be unbecoming and unworthy of the author were I to attempt to deal critically,

and in the expository manner that he so skilfully adopted as his medium for his study of Delius' mind, with the other pieces. My desire is to ring round, not obscure, the clear bull-mark on the target at which he aimed.

At once, let me add to Heseltine from Heseltine's own words. About *Brigg Fair* (pp. 115-117) there is an extremely interesting and practical letter to Delius (printed in Cecil Gray's *Peter Warlock* and dated Nov. 25, 1911) in which the young man of seventeen years of age analyses a performance of the work. In the same letter he offers to make a two-piano arrangement of *In a Summer Garden* (p. 117).

Of *Paris* Beecham in *A Mingled Chime* tells a curious story of its reception at a performance—interrupted beyond hope of reaching the end—in Rome in 1916. Against this we may balance Henry Wood's statement in *My Life of Music* that 'Delius is definitely appreciated abroad.' The music of *Paris* has been made the basis of the ballet *Nocturne* by the Sadler's Wells Ballet Company.

The omission of a detailed analysis of *Koanga* (pp. 101-102) is odd, for the work, with its Negro-Spanish background and its haunting passages, is worthy of study by anyone who wishes to observe the growing development of Delius' mind. *Koanga* was given by Beecham at Covent Garden in 1935, and afterwards toured by his company.

The previous history of Koanga is curious. It was this work which first led Delius to visit Grez-sur-Loing and so was the instrument of introducing him to his and Jelka's future home. The opera was produced in 1904 at the Stadttheater, Elberfeld; in 1914 the score and parts were brought to London and seem to have been lost to view for years. Heseltine unearthed the parts in 1929 and later Professor Patrick Hadley found the score in a publisher's cellar. For the London production of 1935 the work was revised by Sir Thomas Beecham and Mr. Edward Agate.

On the Mountains (p. 53 and footnote) would appear to be, apart from *Florida,* the composer's earliest orchestral work that is really characteristic. It dates from 1892 and bears the polyglot title on the first page 'Paa Viddene, Sur les Cimes. Auf dem Hochgebirg, On the Mountains.' It was first given in London at Beecham's second Delius Festival of 1946. At the same festival certain even earlier works were given—the Three Symphonic Poems ('Summer Evening' (1890), 'Winter Night' (1889), and 'Spring Morning' (1890)) and *Une Marche Caprice* (also from 1890).

No mention occurs of the *Arabesk,* of which Prof. Hutchings expresses a high opinion, nor of the second *Dance Rhapsody*; written in 1916 and first given at the last night of Sir Henry Wood's Manchester Concerts in 1923, it is seldom played but in Hutchings's book rated higher as a piece of construction than No. I. To *Eventyr* we find references, under its older title of 'Once upon a time,' in Heseltine's letters reprinted in Gray's *Peter Warlock.* There is much to be read about this work in Sir Henry Wood's *My Life of Music.*

The most curious neglect of Heseltine's, in view of the fact that he was destined to be, and already was at the time of his book, an important song-writer, is that of Delius' songs. He draws attention to the exquisite and fundamental 'Hy Brasil,' but passes the other songs by the wayside. It may well be argued that Delius' songs are an important part of his musical output, in the sense that they not only contain beauty in themselves, but through their elemental qualities lead the mind towards the understanding of more spacious and more complicated beauties in the extended works. A close study of all Delius' songs was made by Mr. A. K. Holland, and was published serially in *Musical Opinion.*[1] At the time of writing,

[1] 1936 October and November, 1937 January, February, April, May, June.

an announcement has been made that these essays have been collected and are to be issued in book form by the Oxford University Press. There are 50 songs, in various languages. Holland wisely writes that Delius 'did not make a business of song-writing, nor did he dabble in it in an idle hour. He was not a one-string fiddler or a specialist in miniature forms. He wrote songs when he felt the impulse to do so.' 'Songs,' says Holland, 'were not to him either a "relaxation" or a "workshop."' Let me commend, first the songs and then Holland's penetrating study of them, to the reader of Heseltine's book.

Heseltine also leaves out reference to the extant String Quartet, and to *A Song before Sunrise* for small orchestra (1918). The Violoncello Sonata (1917), so beautifully flowing in its melody (as Hutchings agrees), is another odd hiatus.

The works written after Heseltine's closing date can be shortly summarised. They are dealt with fully in Fenby and Hutchings, by either or both. The Third Violin Sonata 'the composer dictated . . . with astonishing rapidity'; some sketches for it survived from the early years of the war. *A Poem of Life and Love* was an older piece which became, in the incident of rewriting, Fenby's first secretarial task (and more than that, it appears!). *A Song of Summer* made use of previously conceived material, but was an entirely new work. The *Irmelin* Prelude 'arose' (writes Fenby) 'out of a few musical ideas that particularly appealed to the composer in his very early unpublished and unperformed opera *Irmelin*'; he refers to it as an 'enchanting lyric for small orchestra' and expresses the regret that 'Delius did not live to hear the sound of it on the orchestra.' *Idyll,* for soprano and baritone with orchestra, is a love duet to some of Whitman's poems, the music being reconstructed from the early opera, *Margot-la-Rouge*. *Cynara,* a setting for voice and orchestra of

Dowson's famous poem, also began as an unfinished sketch, and was rewritten by dictation. By far the most important, in most people's judgment, of the late works is *Songs of Farewell,* written to some of Walt Whitman's verses, chosen by Jelka, for chorus and orchestra. The giving of such a title to a last work is a courageous but not a difficult action; to write music that is worthy of the title's full meaning is a task for genius. Fenby says of the work that 'apart from its intrinsic musical merit, [it] is a monument of what can be done when, the body broken, there still remains in the man the will to create.'

POSTSCRIPT

by Hubert Foss

MORE than a generation has passed since Heseltine published his book; even more years since the last important composition of Delius' sighted years was written; over 20 years since the first culminating 'Festival' and nearly the same since the composer's death. No great span of time, it is agreed; but under its arch the waters of change have flowed more rapidly than perhaps at any other period in history. The change has been physical and scientific, social and æsthetic, of class and culture, of religion and philosophy. The face of the earth itself seems to have altered, not only the expression on it.

Delius' music remains unchanged. His sounds, cut in note-heads upon pewter, are present for our eyes to read and study; many of his envisagings are cut, in a more complicated way, upon wax for our ears to hear. In the passage of the years, there is no difference in Delius' music. The facts of art in history do not change in 30, or in 300, or in 3000 years. The dates 1899 and 1949 have no artistic meaning. History as we write it, however, is annalistic, because it is written by human beings, who measure their duration of the process of living each by his own experience and presaged endurance of continued breath. Delius, dead, remains a prophet, a speaker in music. If he does not, the fault is ours, not his; for he devised music as he knew and believed, and if we too love it we must listen to

it. The question of Delius' reception by a hearing audience in 1950, and thenceonwards, depends, I propose, more upon the hearing audience than upon Delius.

It can be observed from the academic treatises that Delius is quoted in the mid-twentieth century as an exponent of harmony and even of orchestration. The Church is (rightly) the institution in our lives most tied to the past. The English teaching institutions in music, with less excuse (for they deal with living writers), are even more rigid, for the past to which they cling so limpet-like is of moderately short duration. Delius has, then, unconsciously yet inescapably, entered a world he never sought to enter, simply because he was an inescapable composer of music.

Yet one cannot help observing that historians of our English music feel called upon, presumably by the shadows of Brahms and Wagner, to apologise for the separate niche which, academically, Delius occupies. There is no need to apologise. Delius created the niche for himself. A beautiful musical saint he appears in it; and I for one bow before him.

Any attempt to relate Delius annalistically to his times is, I suggest, bound to be a failure in the judgment of art in relation to life. The composer, as far as I can judge, did not relate his music to the movements of civilization at that time surrounding him. He lived his life in the world that was around him; and arranged his life's circumstances so that as little as possible of that outside, ephemeral life should touch his vital circle even as a tangent. Bernard von Dieren wrote:[1] 'The popular conception of the musical classic is of conscious demi-gods enjoying in advance on earth the veneration which centuries were going to bestow —premature Olympians sniffing in imagination the odour of burnt offerings not as yet alight but piled up for their expectant nostrils.' Delius, like most other great composers

[1] 'Music and Wit': *Down among the Dead Men* (Oxford).

(much of whose music he could not endure to hear), did not think at all in that way. He clearly thought that he was a good composer: his persistence shows that. He also thought he was a different composer. In both these views he was correct.

The future of Delius' music, its longevity, no one could sensibly try to assess. A point or two occurs for thought, however; for the music is extant, and only the appreciation of it by us is the variable factor.

The first point is that musical criticism of the accepted class in our day is, apart from one or two renegades, incredibly out-of-date. The ideals of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven still appear to be the touch-stones of taste. The icons of Brahms and Wagner are still revered as those of gigantic masters. Is not all this a hundred years too far back? Even more, I suggest, for in our musical criticism there is still more than a sediment of Ruskin. Morals and art do not agree in practice except in certain definable philosophies.

The second point is that our criticism of music is too deeply coloured by our literary heritage. It is not essential, or even right, to apply the standards of judgment to contemporary composers that are applied commonly to Milton and Spenser. Not every maker of music who delights our ears is of epic stature; if he falls short of that grand size, he is not needfully a bone for critics to quarrel over, with growls. In English poetry, we have gratefully read Tennyson and Shelley, Keats and Wordsworth, Hardy and Housman, Rupert Brooke and Ralph Hodgson, to name no later figures. May not, in the critical light of true exploration, Delius stand among the masters of English lyric verse, without the eternal blarney about his 'lack of form' and his 'inability to construct'? If we adopt today this elderly, text-book point of view, we shall be in danger; we shall rear a critic-Samson who will (poor blind and intentional

man!) pull down the pillars of the temple about himself as well as upon the Philistines. In a dictionary a year or two back, a famous English writer decried the music of Delius as 'hedonistic.' I am unaware that the adjective is derogatory. Music is the art of delight; Delius wrote for our delight; and I am more than content with his offering. 'O yet we trust that somehow good will be the final goal of ill'; very pretty, no doubt, but a Victorian, not an eternal or universal philosophy. I shall revere and enjoy the hedonistic sound of Delius' works of imagination as long as I have hearing ears. In the same way, I shall enjoy Greco and Goya, Durer and Vermeer, Corot, Constable, Richard Wilson, and Sargent, each in his own way. I shall not refer them back to Raphael or any other. Cellini's morals are not my concern, nor is his philosophy. His craftsmanship remains important.

No word shall be added here about Delius' 'philosophy'! It has made too many holes in critical leaky pipes already. Do we question the musical genius, or even abilities, of philosophers—of statesmen or generals or business men? It may be, as Schweitzer the theologian has said, that Bach expounded the doctrine of the Trinity with a new clarity. Doubt may be suggested whether without the words precedent and subsequent to Bach's music any man could have deduced the Christian religion from his written notes and the ensuing sounds.

Frederick Delius' music exists, as I have said, patently to us all. As music it will not die; as music, however, it depends upon aural reception, and that physical matter is one which is commanded by the people living today and tomorrow. To some extent, the hearing of this isolated music depends upon the whims and fancies, the likes and dislikes, of our conductors and 'programme planners.' It may not be thought amiss if I venture here a personal opinion. Delius' music, it seems to me, is of the eternal

kind that appeals to the young. At the hopeful age, the sounds sweep beautifully over one's soul; and the secret which Delius himself had and kept and gave to us is the saving, the preservation in beauty, of those early memories.

Let us, in a final paragraph, forget the rules of the colleges and academies and text-books. Let us thank God for the possession of Delius' music—for its sheer beauty, for its sound, for its dreams, for its emotion, for its intensity, for its power to continue in its purposes.

Let us not by mere theories detract from his gift to us.

APPENDIX

A List of Frederick Delius' Compositions

The list printed overleaf and on the ensuing pages is substantially that which Philip Heseltine—Peter Warlock—compiled for his book first published in 1923: a list he himself modestly labelled 'not altogether complete but including every work of any importance.' It is unhappily necessary to record that even some thirty years later, the time has not arrived when it is possible for an independent student of Delius' music to make a full and definite bibliography of the composer's published and unpublished works. The documents are not available to public scrutiny. But those passing years have brought changes, especially in respect of the issuing publishers. Alterations have therefore been made in the old list to show the present and not the past publisher of each item. It has been thought unnecessary today to indicate what arrangements other than the full score have been issued of the orchestral works. Works written after 1922 have been added, and one or two minor corrections made. There is still no pretension to completeness or even accuracy in what must remain a guide until the Delius Trust opens its coffers.

The editor warmly thanks Mr. Felix Aprahamian for his generous help in bringing the list up to date.

H.F.

Approximate Date of Composition.	Title.	Publisher.
1885.	Song: 'Zwei bräune Augen' (Hans Andersen)	MS.
1886–7.	Suite for orchestra: 'Florida'	„
1888.	Tone-poem for orchestra: 'Hiawatha'	„
„	Melodrama (recitation with orchestra): 'Paa Vidderne' (Ibsen)	„
„	Pastorale, for violin and orchestra	Joseph Williams
„	Rhapsodic Variations for orchestra (unfinished)	„
„	Five Songs from the Norwegian:—	
	'Slumber Song' (Björnsen)	Augener
	'The Nightingale' (Welhaven)	„
	'Summer Eve' (J. Paulsen)	„
	'Longing' (Th. Kjerulf)	„
	'Sunset' (A. Munck)	„
1889.	'Sakuntala' (Holger Drachmann): tenor solo and orchestra	MS.
„	Petit Suite d'orchestre (March—Berceuse—Scherzo—Theme and Variations	„
1889–90.	Two pianoforte pieces	„
„	Seven Songs from the Norwegian:—	Oxford University
	'Cradle Song' (Ibsen)	Press
	'The Homeward Journey' (A. O. Vinje)	„
	"Evening Voices (Björnsen)	„
	'Venevil' (Björnsen)	„
	'Minstrels' (Ibsen)	„
	'Secret Love' (Björnsen)	„
	'The Bird's Story' (Ibsen)	„
1890.	'Légendes' (Sagen): pianoforte and orchestra (unfinished)	MS.
1890.	'Summer Evening' for orchestra	Joseph Williams

First Performance.

1888. Leipzig. Private performance.

Approximate Date of Composition.	Title.	Publisher.
1888.	Two pieces for orchestra :—	
1890.	'Marche Caprice'	Joseph Williams
	'Schlittenfahrt'	,,
1891.	Song-cycle, with orchestra :— 'Maud' (Tennyson)	
	'Come into the garden'	MS.
	'Go not, happy day'	,,
	'I was walking a mile'	,,
	'Birds in the high-hall garden'	,,
	'Rivulet crossing my ground'	,,
,,	Three English Songs (Shelley) :— 'Indian Love Song'	Oxford University Press
	'Love's Philosophy'	MS.
	'To the Queen of my Heart'	,,
1890–2.	'Irmelin.'[1] Opera in 3 acts (text by the composer)	MS.
1892.	Tone-poem for orchestra : 'Sur les cimes' (after Ibsen)	MS.
,,	Sonata for violin and piano (No. 1)	,,
1893.	String Quartet (No. 1)	,,
,,	Legend for violin and orchestra	(C) Forsyth
,,	'The Magic Fountain.' Opera in 3 acts (text by the composer)	MS.
1895.	Tone-poem for orchestra : 'Over the hills and far away'	,,

[1] Delius wrote an opera before *Irmelin*, entitled *Der Wunderborn*; the manuscript of the full score is in the possession of the Delius Trust and has not been disclosed to public. This brings the total of Delius' operas to seven, not six, as hitherto stated.

First Performance.

1893. Monte Carlo concerts.

1899. Delius concert, St. James' Hall, London. (Soloist: John Dunn.)

1899. Delius concert, St. James' Hall, London.

Approximate Date of Composition.	Title.	Publisher.
1895.	Two Songs (Verlaine) :—	Oxford University Press
	'Il pleure dans mon cœur'	
	'Le ciel est par dessus la toit'	„
„	Song : 'Plus vite, mon cheval' (withdrawn from circulation)	
1896.	'Appalachia' : variations for orchestra (first version)	MS.
„	Romance for 'cello and piano (for Joseph Hollmann)	„
„	Romance for violin and piano	„
1895–7.	'Koanga.' Opera in 3 acts with a prologue and epilogue (text by C. F. Keary, after G. W. Cable's novel *The Grandissimes*)	Boosey & Hawkes
1897.	Concerto for pianoforte and orchestra (first version, in 3 movements)	MS.
„	Norwegian Suite, for orchestra (incidental music to Gunnar Heiberg's drama *Folkeraadet*)	„
„	Seven Danish Songs, with orchestra :—	
	'On the seashore' (Holger Drachmann)	„
	'Through long, long years' (J. P. Jacobsen)	„
	'Wine Roses' (J. P. Jacobsen)	„
	'Let Springtime come' (Jacobsen)	Oxford University Press
	'Irmelin Rose' (Jacobsen)	„

First Performance.

[First performance of orchestral version, 1915, Grafton Galleries, London. The Music Club. Singer: Jean Waterston. Conductor: Thomas Beecham.]

1904. March. Elberfeld. [Stadttheater.]

1904. Elberfeld. (Pianist: Julius Buths. Conductor: Hans Haym.)

1897. Christiania.

1899. Delius concert, London. (Singer: Christianne Andray.)

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Approximate Date of Composition.	Title.	Publisher.
1897.	'In the Seraglio Garden' (Jacobsen)	Oxford University Press
	'Silken shoes' (Jacobsen)	
1898.	Tone-poem for orchestra: 'The Dance goes on' (first version of 'Life's Dance')	MS.
,,	Nachtlied Zarathustras (Nietzsche): baritone and orchestra (afterwards incorporated in 'A Mass of Life')	Boosey & Hawkes
,,	Five songs:—	
	'Der Wanderer und sein Schatten' (Neitzsche)	,,
	'Der Einsame' (Nietzsche)	,,
	'Der Wanderer' (Nietzsche)	,,
	'Nach neuen Meeren' (Nietzsche)	,,
	'Im Glück wir lachend gingen' (Holger Drachmann)	,,
1899.	'Paris: the Song of a Great City' Nocturne for orchestra	Universal
1900.	Two songs:—	
	'The Violet' (Ludwig Holstein)	Oxford University Press
	'Autumn' (J. P. Jacobsen)	
1901.	Song: 'Black Roses' (J. P. Jacobsen)	Oxford University Press
1900–1.	'A Village Romeo and Juliet.' Opera, after Gottfried Keller's novel	Boosey & Hawkes

First Performance.

1901. Paris. [Société Nationale de Musique.] Singer: Christianne Andray. Conductor: Vincent d'Indy.)

1899. Delius concert, London.

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1901. Elberfeld. (Conductor: Hans Haym.)

1907. (February). Berlin. [Komisches Oper.] (Conductor: Fritz Cassirer.)

Approximate Date of Composition.	Title.	Publisher.
1902.	'Margot-la-Rouge.' Opera in one act (text by Mme Rosenval)	(lithographed but not published)
„	'Appalachia': variations for orchestra and chorus	Boosey & Hawkes
1903.	'Sea-Drift' (Walt Whitman): baritone solo, chorus and orchestra	„
1904–5.	'A Mass of Life' (Nietzsche): soli, chorus and orchestra	„
1906.	Concerto for pianoforte and orchestra (revised version in one movement)	Boosey & Hawkes
1906–7.	'Songs of Sunset' (Ernest Dowson): soli, chorus and orchestra	Universal
„	'Cynara' (Ernest Dowson): baritone and orchestra	Boosey & Hawkes
1907.	'Brigg Fair': an English Rhapsody, for orchestra	Universal
„	'On Craig Dhu' (Arthur Symons). Unaccompanied chorus	Boosey & Hawkes
1908.	'In a Summer Garden': Fantasy for orchestra	Universal

First Performance.

1904. Elberfeld. (Conductor : Hans Haym.)

1906. Essen. [Tonkünstlerfest.] (Conductor : George Witte. Singer : Josef Loritz.)

1909. London. (Conductor : Thomas Beecham.) [The second part only was given in 1908 at Munich Tonkünstlerfest.]

1907. London. [Promenade Concert.] (Conductor : Henry J. Wood. Pianist : Theodor Szantó.)

1911 (June). London. [Thomas Beecham's Delius Concert, Queen's Hall.]

1907. Basle. [Tonkünstlerfest.] (Conductor : Hermann Suter.)

1910. Blackpool. [Competition Festival.]

1909 (December). London. [Philharmonic Concert.] (Conducted by the composer.) [Revised version, 1913. Edinburgh. (Conductor : Emil Mlynarski.)]

Approximate Date of Composition.	Title.	Publisher.
1908.	'A Dance Rhapsody' (No. 1), for orchestra	Universal
„	'Midsummer Song' (Unaccompanied chorus	„
„	'Wanderer's Song' (Arthur Symons). Unaccompanied male-voice chorus	Boosey & Hawkes
„	Song: 'The Nightingale has a lyre of gold' (W. E. Henley)	Oxford University Press
1908–10.	'Fennimore and Gerda.' Opera, after J. P. Jacobsen's *Niels Lyhne*	Boosey & Hawkes
1910.	Song: 'La lune blanche' (Verlaine)	Oxford University Press
1911.	'Arabesk' (J. P. Jacobsen): baritone solo, chorus and orchestra	Boosey & Hawkes
„	'Summer night on the river': for small orchestra	Oxford University Press
„	'Life's Dance': tone-poem for orchestra	„
1911–2.	'A Song of the High Hills': chorus and orchestra	Universal

First Performance.

1909 (September). Hereford [Three Choirs Festival.] (Conducted by the composer.)

1910 (December). Whitley Bay and District Choral Society. (Conductor: W. G. Whittaker.)

1919 (October). Frankfurt-am-Main.

[First performance for orchestral version, 1915. Grafton Galleries, London. The Music Club. Singer: Jean Waterston. Conductor: Thomas Beecham.]

1920. Newport, Wales.

1914 (January). London. [Philharmonic Concert.] (Conductor: Mengelberg.)

1912. Berlin. (Conductor: Oskar Fried.)

1920 (February). London. [Philharmonic Concert.] (Conductor: Albert Coates.)

Approximate Date of Composition.	Title.	Publisher.
1912.	'On hearing the first cuckoo in spring' for small orchestra	Oxford University Press
1913.	Song: 'Hy-Brasil' (Fiona Macleod)	,,
,,	Two songs for a children's album	,,
1913-4	'North-Country Sketches': for orchestra:—	
	'Autumn: the wind soughs in the trees'	Augener
	'Winter Landscape'	,,
	'Dance'	,,
	'The March of Spring:—woodlands, meadows, and silent moors'	,,
1915.	Sonata for violin and piano[1] [begun in 1905]	Forsyth
,,	Short piece for string orchestra	MS.
1915.	Three Songs:—	
	'Spring, the sweet spring' (Thomas Nashe)	Boosey & Hawkes
	'Daffodils' (Herrick)	,,
	'So sweet is shee' (Ben Jonson)	,,
1914–6.	'Requiem': soli, chorus and orchestra	,,
1915–6.	Concerto for violin and 'cello with orchestra	Augener

[1] Actually No. 2, but published as No. 1; so Violin Sonatas Nos. 2 and 3 (as published) are really Nos. 3 and 4.

First Performance.

1914 (January). London. [Philharmonic Concert.] (Conductor: Mengelberg.)

1915 (May). London. [London Symphony Orchestra's Concert.] (Conductor: Thomas Beecham.)

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1915. Manchester. (Violin: Arthur Catterall. Piano: R. J. Forbes.)

1915. Performed at a private concert at the house of Lady Cunard. (Conductor: Thomas Beecham.)

1915. London. [The Music Club. Grafton Galleries.]

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1922 (March). London. [Philharmonic Concert.] (Conductor: Albert Coates.)

1920 (January). London. [Queen's Hall Symphony Concert.] (Soloists: May and Beatrice Harrison. Conductor: Sir Henry J. Wood.)

Approximate Date of Composition.	Title.	Publisher.
1916.	Concerto for violin and orchestra	„
„	'A Dance Rhapsody' (No. 2) for orchestra	„
„	Song. 'It was a lover and his lass' (Shakespeare)	Boosey & Hawkes
1916–7.	String Quartet (No. 2)	Augener
1917.	'Eventyr' (Once upon a time): Ballad for orchestra, after Asbjörnsen's fairy tales	Augener
„	Sonata for 'cello and piano (in one movement)	Boosey & Hawkes
1917.	Two unaccompanied choruses: 'To be sung of a summer night on the water'[1]	Boosey & Hawkes
1918.	'A Song before Sunrise,' for small orchestra	Augener
1918–9.	'A Poem of Life and Love,' for orchestra	MS. (lost)
1919.	A Dance for the Harpsichord (for Mrs. Gordon Woodhouse)	Universal
„	Song: 'Avant que tu ne t'en ailles' (Verlaine)	Boosey & Hawkes
1920.	Incidental music for James Elroy Flecker's play, 'Hassan: or the the Golden Journey to Samarcand'	Universal
1921.	Concerto for 'cello and orchestra	„

First Performance.

1919 (January). London. [Philharmonic Concert.] Soloist: Albert Sammons. Conductor: Adrian Boult.)

1919. London. London String Quartet.

1919. London. [Queen's Hall Symphony Concert.] (Conductor: Sir Henry J. Wood.)

1918 (November). London. [Wigmore Hall] (Beatrice Harrison.)

1920. London. [Oriana Madrigal Society] (Conductor: Charles Kennedy Scott.)

[First played in public (as a pianoforte piece) by Evlyn Howard-Jones.]

1921. Vienna. (Alexandre Barjansky.)

Approximate Date of Composition.	Title.	Publisher.
1925.	'A Late Lark' for tenor and orchestra (Henley)	Boosey & Hawkes
1930.	'Songs of Farewell' (Whitman)	Boosey & Hawkes
1930.	'A Song of Summer' for orchestra	Boosey & Hawkes
1930.	'Irmelin' Prelude	Boosey & Hawkes
1932.	'Idyll,' for soprano, baritone and orchestra (Whitman)	Boosey & Hawkes
	Sonata for violin and piano, No. 2	Boosey & Hawkes
	Sonata for violin and piano, No. 3	Boosey & Hawkes
	'Caprice' and 'Elegy' for violoncello and orchestra	Boosey & Hawkes
	Air and Dance for string orchestra	Boosey & Hawkes
	'Fantastic Dance' for orchestra	Boosey & Hawkes

[1] Also available as *Two Aquarelles*, arranged for string orchestra by Eric Fenby (Boosey & Hawkes).

First Performance.

1932. Courtauld-Sargent Concert, Queen's Hall, London. Conductor : Sir Malcolm Sargent.

1933. Promenade Concert, Queen's Hall, London. (Conductor : Sir Henry Wood.)

NOTE: In this index the abbreviation D., or (D.), is used for F. Delius

Action, in Opera and in Drama, 68, 91
Agate, Edward, 187
Albert Hall Sunday Concert, D.'s *Life's Dance* given at, 63
Alchemy, Strindberg's studies in, 50
Allon, Erskine, 58
Also sprach Zarathustra by Nietzsche, D.'s music to, 57, 58 & *n.*, criticisms on, in English Press, 58 & *n. sqq.*
"Anatomie et physiologie de l'orchestre," Pamphlet by "Papus" and D. 49 & *n.*
Andray, Christianne, 57, 69
Anlestad, 53
Appalachia (D.), 14, 151, 171, 178; chorus in, 113; conducted by D., 71; performed in Germany and in Paris, 69-70; German approval of, 69; theme from, used in *Songs of Sunset*, 130
Arabesk (D.), 188
Arbos, Señor, 63
Arras, Rue d', Strindberg's rooms in, 51
Austin, Frederic, 70

Bach, 173; D.'s attitude to, 32, 178, 184; Ward's performance of, 42
Bantock, Sir Granville, 58; D.'s music performed by, 63 65
Bartók Béla, *Bluebeard*, 83
Basle, D.'s work at, 69
Bauerkeller, Mr., D.'s first violin teacher, 32
Baughan, E. A., on D.'s first London Concert, 61 & *n.*
Bax, Sir Arnold, 21, 158
Beecham, Sir Thomas, champion of D.'s music, 63 *sqq.*, 63; genius of, 66, 67; versatility of, 67; —*A Mingled Chime*, 12, 21, 143, 150, 154-5, 187; 13, 14, 21-2, 156, 182, 183, 185, 187, 188
Beethoven, D.'s attitude to, 32, 139, 178; later Quartets of, 46; Romantic Music, 130
Belloc, Hilaire, 18
Bergen, 34
Berlin, 34; D.'s works performed at, 63, 69, 70
Berlioz' *Treatise on the Orchestra*, 42
Birkholz, Max, 69
Birmingham Daily Post, 65
Bispham, David, 45
Björnsen, Bergliot, 53
Björnsen, Björnesterne, D.'s visit to, in Norway, 53
Black, Andrew, 57
Black, Mrs. Clare Delius, 12, 13, 19, 22, 138, 139, 140, 142, 143, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 154, 180, 181, 183-5
Bleyle, Karl, 70
Bluebeard, opera (Bartók), 83
Borodin, 19
Bradford, home of Delius, 29-31
Bradford Grammar School, 33
Brahms, 46
Brecher, Gustav, 71
Breslau Opera-house, 56
Brigg Fair (D.) 17, 151, 156, 172, 178, 187; climax in, 129; difficulties of, for conductors, 116; first English performance, 63; first continental performance and success in Germany, 71; folk-song basis of, 115; form reverted to, in, 115; interlude in 116; tempo at p. 116
British Composers, Concert given by, in 1896, 57
Brodsky Quartet, the, 46
Busoni, 46, 69, 139, 153
Buths, and D.'s works, 55, 69
Byrd, John Bull, and others, form employed by, 116

Caprice and Elegy (D.), 184
Cassel, 162, 167
Cassirer, Fritz, D.'s works produced by, 63, 69, 70
'Cello Concerto (D.), 124
Chabrier, Emmanuel, 139
Chamber Concerts, Leipzig, 46
Chamber music, D.'s attitude to, 32
Chamber opera, 90-1
Charpentier, and *La Vie Parisienne*, 118
Chaumière, Grande Rue de, Crêmerie in, frequented by artists, 49
Chemnitz, D.'s life at, 33
Chippewa Indians, musical art of, 74
Chop, Max, monograph by, on D., 70
Chopin, 19, 178; chromaticism of, 124; influence on D., 32
Choral and orchestral works of D., 99, *sqq.*
Chord, the, in D.'s works, 124-130
Chords, concept of, 41
Chorus and orchestra, D.'s handling of, 113-4
Christiania, 53; D.'s music at, for *Folkeraadet*, 54
Claremont, home of D., 31; Chamber music at, 30, 32
Classical music, evolution of, 121
Colles, H. C., 185 *n.*
Cologne, 71
Combarieu, Jules, definition by, of Music, 76
Composer as librettist, 81-2
Concert promoters and choruses, 113
Concertos by D., 122-4
Conrad, Joseph, 29
Conservatorium, Leipzig, D.'s studies in, 45-46
Counterpoint, 40-1; in D.'s music, 124-25
Courier Musical, 70
Covent Garden Theatre, D.'s works performed at, 66-7, 89
Croissy, D. at, 47
Cynara (D.), 184, 189
Dale, Benjamin, 158
Dance, The, goes on (D.) (*see also Life's Dance*), 57, 59
Dance Rhapsody, No. I. (D.), 151, 178; No. II, 166; the first, climax in, 131; first performance of, 70; form of, 116; tune of, 125
Danish Songs, with Orchestra accompaniment (D.), sung in London, 57; and in Paris, 69
Danville, U.S.A., D.'s "professorship" at, 44, 147
Debussy and D., 19, 139, 154, 173, 178—comparison between, 9, 70; harmonic system of, 124-5
Decadence in art, 131
Deichmann, D.'s tutor, 33
Deirdre of the Sorrows, 98 *n.*
Delius, Carl Ludwig, 30
Clare, *see* Black, Clare Delius
Daniel Conrad, 30
Ernest, 35, 43
Ernst, 30
Ernst Frederich, 30
Frederick
Life, 29 *sqq.*, birth and birthplace, 29, 138; ancestry, origin and parentage, 30, 137; early memories, musical and other, 30-2; composers influencing, 32, 46; education, 33; confirmation, 33; early musical tutors, 32, 33; early business days, 33 *sqq.*; decision to abandon the wool business, 36-7; as orange-planter, 37 *sqq.*; rattlesnake adventure, 39; decision to devote himself to music, 38; move to Jacksonville, and on to Danville, 43-4; as Violinist and Pianist, in 1885, 44-5; at Leipzig, 45; life, friends, studies, and musical activities, 45-6; in Norway, 46; his generous uncle, 47; in Paris, hard work and friends, memories of Strindberg, 48, 147; visit to Björnsen, 53; early Ger-

Frederick (*contd.*)
man recognition of his genius, 55; the first London concert, 56; *sqq.*; 68, 120 *n.*, later performance of his works, 63; his debt to Beecham, 63 *sqq.*; Continental performances of his works, and reintroduction to England, 69-70; home of, in France, 71; personality and characteristics of, 9-10, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 142-3, 148, 152-3, 162, 159-166, 170-181, 183-4; views, and letters, 11, 23-4, 142-4, 147, 167-81, 174-6, 179; interest in young people, 18; technique of, Ward's influence on, 40-1; and its development, 120 *sqq.*; self-criticism of, 48, 53, 56, 120, 129; contrasted with Debussy, 70; Max Chop's monograph on, 70; as conductor, 71; views works, discrepancies in, 72-3; musical development of, as shown in his operas, 97 *sqq.*; pantheistic mysticism of (*see also A Mass of Life*), 101; standard by which to be judged, 110; musical conceptions of, unity of, 127; and the Sunset of Romantic Music, 130, *sqq.* 182; constructive or creative genius of, equal to his inspiration, 131; views of, on the acting of opera singers, 68, 90; on the demands of opera, 68; on Harmony, 40; on Heaven, 136;
Compositions by (*see also Appendix, & under Names*), comments on, by Kapellmeisters, 55-6; selected for first London concert, 57-58, 120 *n.*; Press criticisms on, 58 *sqq.*; debt of, to Beecham, 63 *sqq.*; German appreciation of, 62-3, *n.*, 64, 69 *sqq.*; performed but twice in Paris, 69-70; English public, 63 *sqq.*, 70
Choral and orchestral works, 99 *sqq.*
Operas, 74 *sqq.*, with faulty librettos, 81-2; unpublished and unperformed, 98
Pianoforte works, 128
Music of, viewed as a whole, 120 *sqq.*; climax in, 128; chromaticism of, 124; counterpoint in, 125; discords in, 58, 61; harmony in, 124, *sqq.*; chords in, 127-8; "Intimations" in, "of Immortality," 134; *Leitmotiven* in, 129; the sole mannerism in, 128; mature style, characteristics of, 124, *sqq.*; melody in, 125; message of, 136; polyphony in, 125; theme in, 88, 134-5
Gualter, 29
Jelka, see *Rosen*
Johannes, 30
Julius, father of F.D., 30, 139-42, 143; attitude of, to music, 30, 32, 37-9; 35; and D.'s career, 37; mollified by Grieg, 47
Mrs. Julius, 30
Max, 30-1
Theodor, generosity of, to D., 47-9, *n.*l, 52
Delius Festivals—1929, 16, 150, 155, 157, 185; —1946, 22, 151, 188
Delius Society Recordings, 22
Delius Trust, 13, 14, 197
Dent, Prof. Edward, 153
Discords in D.'s music, 58, 61
Donne, on the Unity of the Worlds, 134
Double Concerto (D), 122
Dowson, Ernest, *Lyrics of*, set to music by D., 11, 190 *sqq.*
Dream of Gerontius (Elgar), Strauss's praise, 69
Dresden, 34
Ducouedic, Rue, D.'s Paris flat in, 48

Dufay, Guillaume, 173
Dunn, John, 57
Düsseldorf, D.'s music performed, 62, 69

Edinburgh, D.'s *In a Summer Garden* performed at, 70
Elberfeld, D.'s works produced at, 55, 69
Elgar, Sir E., 19, 157, 174, 183; *Dream of Gerontius* by, German admiration of, 69
Emerson, 23
Encausse, Dr ("Papus"), pamphlett written, with D. 49 & *n.* 2
English attitude to D.'s music, 58 *sqq.*, 63 *sq.*, 64 *n.*
English Review, The, 64 *n.*
Eriksen Ida, Madame Mollard, 49
Erwartung, Schönberg, 90
Evans, Edwin, on "Musician's love of Music," and on D.'s Royal Academy of Music Concerts, 64 *n.*
Eventyr (D.), 171, 188

Fantastic Dance (D.), 184
Fauré, Gabriel, 173
Fenby, Eric, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 139, 143, 144, 148, 150, 152, 161, 178, 183, 184, 189, 190
Fennimore and Gerda, opera (D.), 151, 171; form of, 91; libretto, 83; origin of, 91, 95-7; produced in Germany, 71; reminiscence in, 130; story of, 92 *sqq.*
"Fiona Macleod's" poem *Hy Brasil*, D.'s setting of, 134
Five Orchestral Pieces, by Schönberg, 61, *n.* 1
Flagellantenzug (Bleyle), 70
Florida, D.'s life in, 36 *sqq.*; impressions of, in D.'s operas, 98; *see also* 143-7
Florida (D.), 171, 188; Orchestral suite (D.), first work by D. performed, 47
Folk of Seldwyla, D.'s opera based on, 83
Folkeraadet, orchestral suite (D.), 57; reception of, 54
Förster, Georg, 69
France, D. unknown to, though living in, 69, 71-2
Franck, César, 57 *n.*, symphony by, criticism on, 79
Frankfurt-am-Main, D.'s *Fennimore and Gerda* produced at, 71, 155, 175
Fried, Oscar, 69
Fuller-Maitland, J. A., 12

Gardiner, Balfour, 65, 157-9, 162, 176, 178, 183
Gauguin, Paul, 49-50, 181; exhibition of, 52
German attitude to D.'s music, 55, 63, 64 *n.*, 69-71
Gewandhaus, Leipzig Orchestral Concerts at, 45
Gilson, Paul, 49 *n.*
Glazounow, M., 59
Goethe, 19
Gorillas, Strindberg on, 50
Gothenburg, D.'s visit to, 34
Gounod, 56
Grainger, Percy, 115, 155, 158, 160, 183, 184; reminiscences, 171-180; *Hill Songs* and other works, 172, 177
Grand Opera, 91
Graves, C. L., 12
Gray, Cecil,
—*Warlock, Peter*, 10, 12, 14, 16, 22, 25, 181, 187, 188
—*Musical Chairs*, 12, 13-14, 15, 19, 20, 22, 144
Survey of Contemporary Music, 19
Greek Drama, component parts of, 83
Grew, Sydney, on the attitude of Germany and England towards D.'s music, 64 *n.*
Grez-sur-Loing, 13, 19, 137, 142, 145, 148, 149, 150, 151, 156, 160, 161, 162, 164, 174, 180, 182, 187; D.'s home since 1899, 71-2
Grieg, Edvard, 172, 178; *Humoresken* by, 32, 46; influence of, on D.'s father, 47; D.'s *Irmelin* praised by, 97

Haddock, Mr, D.'s violin teacher, 32
Hadley, Professor Patrick, 187
Hallé, Sir Charles, 32
Halvorsen, 46
Hamsun, Knut, 53
Hanley, D.'s compositions performed at, 66, 71
Harcourtstrasse, D.'s Leipzig room in, 45
Harmony, 41; D.'s views on 40; in D.'s music, 124 *sqq.*
Harrison, the Misses, 183
Hart, Fritz, 98 *n.*
Hawley, Stanley, 58
Haydn, Josef, and the English Horn, 79, 178
Haym, Dr Hans, D.'s works performed by, 55, 69, 146
Heiberg, Gunnar, play by, D.'s music for, 53
Hereford, D.'s *Dance Rhapsody* performed at, 70
Herz, Alfred, and D., 56, 63, 150; D.'s first London concert conducted by, 56 & *n.*
Heseltine, Joseph, 17
Heseltine, Philip, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 137, 138, 140, 142, 144, 146, 147, 148, 149, 151, 153, 154, 181, 193, 186, 187, 188
Hindemith, Paul, 178
Hinton, Arthur, 58
Holst, Gustav, 158
Holland, A. K., 19, 188-9
Howard-Jones, Evlyn, 183
Humoresken (Grieg), 32
Hutcheson, Ernest, 45
Hutchings, Prof. Arthur, 12, 14, 184, 188, 189
Hy-Brasil, (D.), 164

Ibéria (Debussy), 55 *n.*
Ibsen, Hendrik, and D., 54; poem by, D.'s work based on, 53
Icelandic Sagas, 178
Ilkley, 31
In a Summer Garden (D.), 151, 152, 187; described, 117; first performance when rewritten, 70-1
Indy, Vincent d', 69
Irmelin Prelude (D.), 184, 189
International College, Isleworth, D. at, 33
Irmelin, opera (D.), 48 & *n.* 1, 189; libretto of, 81; praised by Grieg and Messager, 48 *n.* 1, 97

Jacobsen Jens Peter, 171, 178; *Niels Lyhne* by, basis of D.'s libretto for *Fennimore and Gerda,* 91, 92, 96
Jacksonville, D.'s meeting at, with Ward, 40; D.'s musical efforts at, 42, 147; the Chief Rabbi's generosity, 44 & *n.*
Jadassohn, 45
Jebe, Halfdan, 53, 56
Joachim, 32

Kaiser, Rose, 69
Kammermusiksaal, Leipzig, Concerts at, 46
Keats, 19
Keller, Gottfried, tale by, basis of D.'s *Village Romeo and Juliet,* 83, 91
Keyboard Instruments, influence of, on developing concept of Harmony, 42 *n.*
Koanga, opera (D.), 171, 187; epilogue from sole English performance of, 63
Koenen, Tilly, 57
Königin von Saba (Goldmark), 34
Kritik der Kritik, 70
Krönig, Fräulein (Mrs. Julius Delius), 30

Lady, The, on D.'s first London concert, 60
Lassen, Eduard, D.'s Opera, *The Magic Fountain,* accepted by, 53
Lawes, William, 173
Lawrence, D. H., 147
Leclerc, 50, 51
Legend (D.), 120 *n.*
Legge, Robin, 46
Leipzig, D.'s studies at, 40-1
Lengenberg, Charlotte, 69

Libretto, the 76-9; in relation to the Opera, 80 *sqq.*
Life's Dance (D.), 63, 69, 132, 151
Liszt, Franz, 139, 173
Liverpool, D.'s *Brigg Fair* performed at, 63
Llewellyn, William, 57
Lohengrin (Wagner), 32
London, D.'s first concert in, conductor, programme, performers, criticisms, 56 *sqq.*; other performances in, of D.'s music, 63-5, 70
London Symphony Orchestra's Concerts, D.'s music produced at, by Beecham, 64
Lugdunum, Ritter's contrast in, between D. and Debussy, 70

Machaut, Guillaume de, 173
Mackenzie, Sir Alexander, 12, 20
Madrigalists and their art, 78, 128
Magic Fountain, The, opera (D.), 48; libretto of, 81; reminiscence in, 130
Mahler, 178
Manchester, D.'s business days at, 36
March, The, of Spring (D.), 110, 119
Marchesi, Mme., 53
Marcus Aurelius, 171
Margot-la-Rouge, one-act opera (D.), 48, 97-8
Mass, A, of Life (D.), 56, 63, 64, 71, 98, 110, 127, 151, 165, 167; characterized, 100 *sqq.*; climax in, 128-9; reminiscence in 130; second part, produced at Munich, 70
Meistersinger, Die (Wagner), 34
Melody in D.'s music, 125 *sqq.*
Mère Charlotte, crémerie of, *habitués* of, 49
Meredy and Payne, Jacksonville, 40
Messager, André, on D.'s opera *Irmelin,* 48 *n.* 1, 97
Metropolitan Opera House, New York, Hertz at, 56 *n.*; 150
Mitternachtslied, from *Zarathustra* (D.), first London performance and Press comments, 56, 58-60; performed in Berlin, 69
Mlynarski, Emil, 71
Mollard, William and his wife, 49; Strindberg's quarrel with, 52
Monte Carlo, D.'s luck at, 35
Monthly Musical Record, 149
Montrouge, D.'s Paris abode, 49
Moritura, Dowson's poem, set to music by D., 111
Morning Advertiser on D.'s first London Concert, 59
Morning Post, on D.'s first London concert, 59
Moussorgsky, 19
Mozart, D.'s attitude to, 32, 178
Munch, Edvard, and Strindberg, 51-2
Munich, D.'s work produced at, 70
Music, Definitions of, 74-5, 76; D.'s earliest remembrances on, 30, 32; and drama in opera, relation between, 83; emotions inspiring, 77; fundamentals of, 74; programme underlying, 76, *sqq.*, two kinds, 80, *sqq.*; the "something-more" in, 77; untranslatable into any other medium, 74, 78
Classical evolution of, 121
Modern, 135
Romantic, D. the Sunset of, 131 *sqq.*
Music and Life, passivity of D., Turner on, 89 *n.*
Musical Criticism, dissertation on, 74 *sqq.*; and Opera, 88
'*Musical League,*' *The,* 152, 177
Musical Opinion, 189
Musical Standard, on D.'s first London concert, 61
Musical Times, on D.'s *Zarathustra,* 58 *n.*

Nachtlied Zarathustras (D.), 56
National Sunday League's Concerts, D.'s music produced at, by Beecham, 64
Negroes, musical gifts of, 42
"Nevermore," painting by Gauguin, D.'s purchase of, 52
Newman, Ernest, D.'s importance appreciated by, 65
Nieder-Rheinisches Musikfest, Düsseldorf, D.'s *Appalachia* performed at, and praised, 62
Niels Lyhne, by Jacobsen, D.'s *Fennimore and Gerda* derived from, 91 & *n. sqq.*
Nietzsche, and *A Mass of Life* (D.), 101
Nikisch, 45
Norrköping, D.'s business success at, 34
North Country Sketches (D.), 63, 110, 123, 134, 143, 151, 175; mood picture of the seasons, 119
Norway, D.'s tours in, 34-5, 46, 53-4

Offenbach and *La Vie Parisienne,* 118
Ola dalom, I, basis of *On Hearing the First Cuckoo* (D.), 118, 172
On Craig Dhu (D.), 17, 159; chorus in, 128
On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring (D.), 172-3 178; performed under Beecham, 63; bases and beauty of, 118; sadness in, explained, 133-4
O'Neill, Norman, 9, 12, 18, 22, 148, 152, 157, 158, 181, 183
Opera and concert, difference between, 80; definition of, 88; demands of, 67; D. on, 68; and Libretto, relation between, 80, *sqq.*; as a *Musical form,* 79; as parable or symbolism, 82; scope of, as exemplified in D.'s works, 82-83, 190 *sqq.*
Chamber, 90-1
Grand, 91
Operatic acting, D.'s dictum on, 67-8, 90
Operas by D., 74 *sqq.*
Oriana Madrigal Society, 157, 159
Over the Hills and Far Away, Fantasy-Overture (D.), 55, 57

Paa vidderne (Ibsen) 53 & *n.*
Palestrina, chord-passages by, true nature of, 41
Pall Mall Gazette on D.'s first London concert, 60-1
"Papus," *see* Encausse, Dr
Paris, D.'s compositions performed at, 69; D.'s life at, and hard work during, 48 *sqq.*
Paris, the Song of a Great City, Nocturne (D.), 55, 154, 187; described, 117; produced at Elberfeld, 69
Parry, Sir Hubert, 12, 20, 157, 174
Part-singing, instinctive, 41
Perosi, 61
Phantasy, the form of, 122
Philharmonic Choir, 164, 168, 170
Piano Concerto (D.), 54; climax in, 129; conducted by Haym, 69; revision of, 122; first London performance of revised, 62-3
Piatti, 32
Pitt, Percy, 45
Poem of Life and Love, A, (D.), 189
Poetry, Wordsworth's definition of, 132
Polyphonic period, 41
Polyphony in D.'s music, 125
Posthumous Valse (Chopin), influence of, on D., 32
Powell, Douglas, 57
Przbechevsky, and his wife, and Strindberg, 52

Queen's Hall, 156
Quilter, Roger, 183, reminiscences, 155-6

Ravel, 19, 48, 139, 173, 178
Reinecke, 45
Reminiscence in D.'s music, 130
Requiem (D.), 126, 134, 166, 168, 174, 182; characterized,

Requiem (D.) (*contd.*)
111-112; musical interest of, 108; reminiscence in, 130; text of, 106 *sqq.*
Ritter, William, on D.'s *Mass of Life*, part II, 9, 70
Riviera, D.'s excursion to, 35
Rogers, Winthrop, 166 & *n.*
Romantic music, D. the Sunset of, 130 *sqq.*
Röntgen rays, 51
Rosen, Jelka (Mme. F. Delius), 13-14, 21, 48, 137, 144, 148-9, 153, 156, 160, 163, 169, 172, 182, 185, 186, 190
Royal Academy of Music, 12; D.'s works performed at, 64
Royal College of Music, 12
Royal Philharmonic Society's Concerts, D.'s music performed at, by Beecham, 63-4, 152-3
Ruckert, Professor, 43
Runciman, John F., on the contemporary criticisms of D.'s first London concert, 61-2

Sadler's Wells Ballet, 187
St. James's Hall, first Delius concert at, 57
Saint-Etienne, 35
St. Paul, 162
St. John's River, Florida, 37; alligators of, 39
San Francisco Symphony Concerts, Herz conductor of, 56 *n.*, 150
Scandinavia, D.'s visits to, 34, 46, 54; musical friends in, 48
Scarborough, 142
Schilsky, Edouard, 45
Schlittenfahrt, for Orchestra (D.), 46
Schmitt, Florent, 48
Schönberg, Arnold, 61 *n.*; *Erwartung* by, 90; harmonics of, 125
Schumann, 173
Scott, Charles Kennedy, 155, 183; reminiscences, 157-170
Scriabin, harmonic system of, 124
Sea Drift (D.), 14, 63, 68, 98, 110, 151, 155, 156, 159, 164, 169; German appreciation of, 69; Newman's programme, analysis of, 65; Beecham's scoreless conducting of, 66; first English performance, 70; described, 99-100

Sheffield Musical Festival, D.'s *Sea Drift* performed at, 70
Sibelius, Jean, 154
Simon, Heinrich, 149
Sinding, Christian, 46, 153
Siren Voices (*see* Niels Lyhne)
Sitt, Hans, D.'s violin tutor, 33, 45
Slivinsky, 49
Société Nationale de Musique, concert of, D.'s *Danish Songs* given at, 69
Solano orange grove, D.'s life on, 36 *sqq.*, and later visit to, 53
Song before Sunrise, A, (D.), 189
Song of the High Hills, A, (D.), 110, 130, 151, 160, 163, 164, 171, 172-3, 176, 178; chorus in, 113; form of, 114
Song of Summer, (D.), 184, 189
Songs of Farewell (D.), 184
Songs by D., 164
Songs of Sunset (D.), 63, 151, 172; form of, 114; mood of, 111-2; reminiscence in, 130
Spiritualism of Strindberg, 51
Spring Grove (*see* International College)
Stanford, Sir Charles, 12, 20, 157
Steggall, Reginald, 58
Stevenson, R. L., on the village of Grez, 71-2
Stockholm, D.'s visit to, 34
Strauss, Richard, 55, 59, 61,
Strindberg, August, and D., 49; D. on, 49 *sqq.*
String Quartet (D.), 167, 189
Summer Night on the River (D.), 63, 172, 178
Sunday Sun, on D.'s Zarathustra, 58-9
Sur les Cimes, Orchestral work (D.), 188; performed 1893, 53 & *n.*

Sylva Sylvarum (Strindberg), 51
Szanto, Theodor, 62

Tahiti, Gauguin's paintings of, 52
Tattersfield, Mr., 146
Taylor, Colin, 17
Tchaikovsky, 46
Tertis, Lionel, 183
Time and the Idea in music, 74
Times, The attitude of, to D.'s music, 59, 185 *n.*
To be Sung of a Summer Night on the Water (D.), 159, 166
Tones composing a chord, D.'s disposition of, 126-7
Tonkünstlerfest des Allegemeinen Deutschen Musikvereins, D.'s music performer by, at different places, 62, 69, 70, 71
Tovey, Sir Donald, 145
Treatise on the Orchestra, by Berlioz, 42
Tristan und Isolde (Wagner), 81; at Leipzig, 45
Turner, W. J., on *Music and Life* (D.), 89 *n.*
"Tutti, Le orchestrale" (Gilson), 49 *n.* 2

Universal, the, in Music, 76, 78, 79, 83

Vanderbeek, G. A., 57
Van Dieren, Bernard, 24-5; music of, Serenity of, 136
Vercingétorix, Rue, Gauguin's studio in, 52
Verlaine, and Strindberg, 51
Village Romeo and Juliet, A, Opera (D.), 14, 110, 151, 154; D.'s masterpiece, 98; produced in Berlin, 63, 70; Beecham's production of, 63, 68; criticism on, 79; climax in, 131; diatonic melody in, 125; libretto of, 82, 91; nature of, 87; story, 83 *sqq.*
Ville d'Avray, D. at, 47
Violin Concerto (D.), 145, 166; *Motif* in, 123-4
Violin Sonata (D.), 121-2
Violin Sonata, No. 3 (D.), 184, 189
Violoncello Sonata (D.), 166, 178, 189
Vogel, Wilhelm, 33

Wagner, 9, 19, 55, 139, 173, 178; chromaticism of, 125; discords of, 61; influence of, on D., 32; librettos of, 81; use by, of *Leitmotiven,* 129; and romantic music, 130; performances at Leipzig, 45
Wallace, Edgar, 175
Wallace, William, 58
Ward, T. F., instruction given by, to D., 40, 42-3
Warlock, Peter (*see Philip Heseltine*)
Weber, 9
Weimar, 53
Westminster Gazette, on D.'s first London programme, 60
Whistling in thirds by a negro, 42
Whitehill, Clarence, 69
Whitman, Walt, 156, 178, 190
Wiesbaden, 168
Winter Landscape, A (D.), 119
Wood, Sir Henry, 17, 65, 70, 155, 181-2, 187, 188
Wordsworth, definition by, of poetry, 19, 161, on his aims in *Lyrical Ballads,* 132
Wuthering Heights, 98 *n.*, 143

Yorkshire Post, 150

Zarathustra, message of, as given in *A Mass of Life* (D.), 100-101 *sqq.*
Zurich, D.'s *Brigg Fair* performed at, 71